BRITISH ISLES NAZARENE COLLEGE
DIDSBURY,
MANCHESTER 20

E. STANLEY JONES
Books & Periodicals
6
KEW ARCADE

252
S742

The Master of the Heart

By
ROBERT E. SPEER
Author of "Missionary Principles and Practices," "The Man Christ Jesus," etc., etc.

BRITISH ISLES NAZARENE COLLEGE
DIDSBURY,
MANCHESTER 20.
WITHDRAWN

3791

NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

Copyright, 1908, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 80 Wabash Avenue
Toronto: 25 Richmond Street, W.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 100 Princes Street

PREFACE

The chapters of this little book are not essays, but addresses. They are not theological or literary, but practical. They were spoken in the first place to the young men and women of the Northfield Conferences in the summertimes. They present simply and earnestly some personal aspects of Christian truth. They were reported at the time and are printed here in almost their original colloquial form, in the hope that in some life they may make a larger place for our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. Their only merit is their effort to exalt Him.

R. E. S.

NEW YORK.

BRITISH ISLES NAZARENE COLLEGE
DIDSBURY,
MANCHESTER 20.
WITHDRAWN

BRITISH ISLES NAZARENE COLLEGE
DIDSBURY,
MANCHESTER 20.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ	9
II.	The Believing Heart	33
III.	Christ's Appeal to the Doubting Heart	56
IV.	The Heart's Response to the Master's Call	72
V.	The Inner Circle	93
VI.	Looking Away to Jesus	110
VII.	The Unity of Hearts in Christ	132
VIII.	The Master, the Maker of Strong Hearts	151
IX.	The Master's Work for His Followers	167
X.	The Burning Heart	185
XI.	The Master, the Satisfaction of the Heart	206
XII.	The Uniqueness of Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ	223

I

OUR LORD AND MASTER, JESUS CHRIST

ONE of the most beautiful scenes in the Bible is the picture which John draws for us in the twentieth chapter of his Gospel, of Mary Magdalene at the tomb of Jesus on Easter morning. John tells us that before it was light she had come to the grave, unable to accustom herself to the loss of her Master. If she could no longer have Him personally with her, she would, at least, be as near as possible to His body. She found the stone taken away, and hastened back to the city to tell the Apostles that the sepulchre was empty. Peter and John at once ran together to the tomb, John, the younger man, outrunning Peter. Not having the courage of the elder man to go into the sepulchre, however, he waited until Peter came up and looked in, and then together they noticed that Jesus' linen clothes were there, but that He was gone. The empty chrysalis of the grave clothes convinced them of the resurrection, and they went away. Mary Magdalene had evidently followed them from the city, but remained at the sepulchre after their departure. John tells us that as she was

waiting there, she summoned up courage to look in, and saw two angels in white, "one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain," and that after these two angels had asked her why she wept, and she had answered, "Because they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him," she heard a sound over her shoulder, and turned her face to see who was there. She turned only her face, and, John says, supposed it was the gardener whom she saw. He asked her the same question which the angels had asked, adding, "Whom seekest thou?" The Lord's thought was of the object of her search, rather than of the cause of her tears. Finding that she failed to recognise Him, and had turned back to the tomb again, He called to her at last by name—"Mary"; and John says she wheeled about at once, her whole body this time, with the quivering words, "*My Master!*" I do not think there are many sweeter things in the Gospels than that, or any sweeter words than these which Mary used at the sepulchre—"My Master." The Gospels show that nowhere in the Gospels did Jesus bid men to call Him "King." He told no one to call Him "the Son of God." He was both. But He did tell them clearly that they did right in calling Him "Master."

We use the word often nowadays. There is scarcely any word that is so frequently on the lips of earnest students in our schools and

colleges in describing Christ as the word "Master," and perhaps there is scarcely any word that is used so often with inadequate conception of the full content of the personality of Christ. Men speak of "Christ and other masters." People who do not think of acknowledging that Jesus Christ is their divine Lord and only Saviour, speak of Him as their "Master." It is not a new thing that the word should be used even in the way of thoughtlessness or insincerity or cant. The same word that Mary used Judas also used when he came to Jesus with his kiss—"Hail Master."

It is right for each of us to use the words, "My Master," but is it right for us to use them without an appreciation of what they mean? Glance back over the past year, and let us see whether, tested by what we have done, Jesus Christ has been our Master. Have we been where we have been solely because we have thought it would please our Master to have us there? Have we regarded Him as in any sense Master over the choice of electives, our relations to men, the reading of books, all tastes and habits of life, the form of business, the choice of friends, the use of money, the expenditure of time? Or, tested on the touchstone of our plans for the future, is Jesus Christ our Master? Are we planning to do next year what we believe it is His wish for us to do? Have we shaped our ideals and tastes, our thoughts of life, with sole

reference to the pleasure of the one whom we call our Master? I think if we are honest with our own hearts, no matter which test we use, we shall see that in a very poor sense has Christ been the Master of any one of us. And yet He claims to be. "I," He says, "Your Lord and Master."

What is covered by this claim of Christ's to perfect sovereignty over us, and by our recognition of His right to the first place in our lives and wills? It will help us to answer if we take time to think of some of those terms by which the first Christians avowed their recognition of Christ's right to this pre-eminence, especially two sets of titles by which they referred to our Lord in the first years of the Christian Church. First of all, the title of Master, and those other names that are associated with that. There are five different words in the New Testament which are translated master in our English Bibles. The first of them (διδάσκαλος) means simply teacher. It is the word that was used by the two disciples of John when they left their master, and turned to follow Jesus, and said to him, "Rabbi," which is by interpretation "Master, where dwellest thou?" It was the word that Mary used on the resurrection morning. This was the simplest of the titles by which the early Christians recognised the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ. They acknowledged that He was their Master in the sense that they had now entered His school, and that whatever

education they were receiving was an education in which He held the place of pre-eminent teacher. Now, our Lord teaches men still, who call Him "Master" in many ways. There is a powerful educational influence just in His presence. Many times we forget the power of education which there is in personal companionship, not in speech, or in pressed influence only, but in the unconscious influence of presence upon the thought and judgment. There are thousands of men who cannot think in their mother's presence of that of which they can think when out of her presence. There is a wrath against sin born in the presence of Christ that cannot be maintained outside His presence. There is love of tenderness, there is a fondness for the likeness of His Father's countenance, in the presence of Christ that is not begotten where Jesus Christ's presence is not exercising the mastery of education over life. We see this principle in the life of our Lord, in those expressions in the prologue of the Gospel of John, that declare to us that the face of the Word was ever directed towards the face of the Father, *πρός τὸν Θεόν*—not that He was with God only, but that He never looked at anything in itself, but only in the face of God; that He saw this world not in itself, but reflected in the face of God; that He judged life and all its values not as they appeared in themselves, but as He saw them in the face of God. Our Lord thought His thoughts and formed His judgments in the educating pres-

ence of God. And if He is my Master, He begins in my life this process of education by personal influence; He makes me loathe or love those things that I would not loathe or love if I did not make Him my pre-eminent teacher in this regard and feel always as I would feel with Him.

The Apostles constantly appeal to this truth when they hold before the eyes of the early Christians the prospect of Christ's second coming, and exhort them by the hope of His coming to greater purity and strength of life. Why? They appealed to them to cherish certain judgments because, if Christ were there, they would cherish those judgments; they appealed to them to lead certain lives, because in Christ's presence they would not be satisfied with any other kind of life. "And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."

But if Christ is my Master in any real and complete sense He will be teaching me in other ways than by this general educational influence of His presence. Think of His masterful teaching in the matter of prayer, in the matter of service, in the matter of humility! Who ever entered His school who was not taught lessons in service and humility and prayer that none but the Master could teach? Or think how He sets Himself to be the lesson that we are to learn.

I like the way in which, after so constantly putting things indirectly, the New Testament rises with dauntless directness and says we are not to feed only upon the influence of Jesus; we are to feed upon Jesus. We are not alone to live by the words of God that come out of His mouth, we are to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ. And so we are not only to sit in our Master's school and have His influence work upon our judgments in its mighty transforming power, not alone to sit in His school and be taught lessons of prayer and humility and service—we are to set Him before us and learn Him. "Ye have not so learned Christ," said Paul in one of his choice expressions. And Simon Peter conveys the same idea by the phrase in which he describes Jesus by the same term that was used to describe the copy that a schoolmaster wrote at the head of the wax tablet for his pupils, an ἐπιγράμμη that they should reproduce, "Follow in His steps." If Jesus Christ is our Master—not in any perfunctory sense, not in the sense in which we speak of other masters—if He is our Master really and sincerely and vitally, then you and I are pupils in His school, and all our judgments take form from His influence. We ourselves are little children learning the lessons that He sets for us. Yes, we are the little children who learn the lesson that He Himself is.

The second word for "Master" occurs only

once, and then in the Gospel of Matthew towards the close of the Gospel, where Jesus says to His disciples, "Have not many masters, for One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Καθηγήτης is the Greek word, and it means, literally, "leader," the man who goes before, after whom the disciples go. It was a more pertinent word, perhaps, in those early days when schools moved about and walked after their teachers, their pedagogues, but it is a pertinent word even still. If Jesus Christ is my Master I set Him before my eyes and give Him pre-eminence as the leader of my life, and all that I am and do must take shape for the path in which He leads me. The very natures that He has given us demand such a Master as Jesus Christ in just this regard. No human life can get along without some kind of a master of this sort. We make them for ourselves out of our friends, we make them out of dead heroes, or we find him in Jesus Christ, our Master Leader, Himself. He sets for us the example of our life, so that we deem those things despicable which He deemed despicable, those things loathsome which He despised, and only those things beautiful and holy which lay close and warm upon His heart.

Is Christ our Master, in this sense of setting us as leader an obligatory example? We look at His example, and the first thing that impresses us is the breadth of His spirit. Probably the influence of most of us is not felt beyond twenty

or thirty souls. Christ's influence was unrestrained and illimitable. They once tried to confine Him to the city of Capernaum, where He had had great success; where people were willing to give Him everything He needed. His disciples suggested that they should localise their work there. It was a rational course which they proposed, but the breadth of His spirit would never allow Him to stay within the borders of a single village. He broke such bands asunder as Samson had broken his in the days of his strength, to let His love and effort go out widely, to all the cities and villages of His country, and to those other sheep who were not of that Jewish fold. He spoke not of any one community or nation, but of the world as His field. He told His disciples He had a message which was intended for the whole earth. If Christ is our guide, in the sense that we are to follow Him, to possess the same traits of character that marked Him, then no one of us dare be narrow in our love or our service. The world must be our parish, also. Looking at Him still as our leader, our example, we note, as a second thing that marked Him, His self-sacrifice. Paul spoke of it tenderly when he said, "Though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be rich." He spoke of it yet more tenderly when he wrote to the Philippians that he wished very much that they might have in them that mind that was in Christ Jesus, who

though He was in the form of God, thought not equality with God a prize to be jealously retained, "but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Yet a third characteristic was His unwearied, unhesitating constancy, the unwavering persistence of the service He wrought. He was weary or hungry; He worked on still. The Son of man came to meet the needs of men, and no obstacle was great enough to hinder Him in His effort to meet those needs. Is Jesus Christ our Master in the sense that our lives are following His guidance, and seeking to resemble Him in these respects?

The third word for "Master" occurs only in the Gospel of Luke, and there about half a dozen times. It is the word which Simon Peter used after the night of their fruitless fishing on the Galilean sea when Jesus bade them to cast the net on the other side and they would find fish. "Master, we have toiled all night and taken nothing; notwithstanding, at thy word, I will let down the net for a draught." It is the word the disciples used when Jesus was asleep in the boat among the troubled waves of the sea. "Master," they said, "carest thou not that we perish?" It is the word which the sons of Zebedee used when they came to Him and said, "Master, we saw one

casting out devils in thy name. We forbade him, because he followed not with us." Ἐπιστάτης is the Greek word. "Overseer," it means, the one who has complete control over our methods of service, the one who has a right to direct us in our toil, to tell us the things to be done and not to be done, the one to whom we look for counsel and direction and advice, and under whose rule we reverently lay all our schemes and plans for His direction and control. Is Jesus Christ our master in any such sense? Have we given Him the pre-eminence honestly in this regard, so that He has become the true overseer of our lives, so that He directs us in our work? Think of the immense amount of fruitless, flippant, frivolous, shallow and squalid work done in this world that would be undone at once by men who took their directions from Him. Think of all the tenderness of heart that would come into the toil of men who were working under His direction and following His methods in their toil. I met an old man some years ago who told me of a visit he had paid to the city of Dundee in Scotland not many years after the death of Robert Murray McCheyne, for whom the whole of Scotland wept, although he died at the age of only twenty-nine. He said that when he got off in Dundee, he asked a man on the street if he could tell him where McCheyne's home was. "Oh, yes," said the man with a smile, pointing him down the street to where McCheyne's church

and manse were standing. Then he knocked at the door where McCheyne had lived, and his old sexton let him in and took him into the study where McCheyne's books were still upon the table, and he said, "Sit down here," taking him up to the chair in which McCheyne worked, and my friend sat down. "Now," he said, "put your elbows down on the table," and he put his elbows down. "Now," he said, "put your face down in your hands," and he put his face in his hands. "Now," he said, "let the tears fall. That was the way my pastor used to do." And he took him into the church and into the pulpit where McCheyne had preached, and he said, "Put your elbows down on the pulpit," and he put his elbows down on the pulpit. "Now," he said, "put your face in your hands," and he put his face in his hands. "Now," he said, "let the tears fall. That was the way my pastor used to do." And that was the way our Master used to do. As He drew near the city, we read that He wept over it, and He cried, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if thou hadst but known in this thy day the things that belong unto thy peace; but now they are hidden from thine eyes." I think one reason why so much of our service is dead and fruitless is because it has no vision of the overseeing Christ whose eyelids knew the touch of tears, and who would direct those who would follow Him as their loving and pre-eminent Master, in ways of service that would find access to

the hearts of men as His way found access to their hearts and holds them in absolute sovereignty still.

It is this mastery of Jesus Christ that will do in the realm of our work what the teaching of Jesus Christ will do in the realm of our thinking and our judgment. There is a power in the presence of Christ to quicken the sluggish life. Who has not seen the torpid life touched by Christ? I have a friend who is a workman in a steel mill. Some years ago he was not able even to read. When he was converted, he could not read a chapter in the Bible, but after his conversion he made up his mind he must learn to read in order to be able to study the Bible. He has had no education except what he has found in the mastery of Christ and in the study of His word. And it is a treat to hear that man pray—the rich, fluent dignity, the deep, reverent spirit—and to sit down and talk with him is like talking with a man who had been at school at the Master's feet, who had had all his sluggish instincts touched by Christ and raised into new life, whose torpid life had been quickened and awakened by the living One. The dullest of us can be touched by the power of Christ's mastery when once His pre-eminence as overseer of life is honestly and candidly recognised and the whole life yielded up to His rule.

The fourth word that is translated "Master" is the word Κύριος. Most of the time it is trans-

lated "Lord." It is the word which Jesus uses in the Sermon on the Mount when He says that "no man can serve two masters; either he will hate the one and love the other, or cleave to the one and despise the other." It is the constant word in the New Testament of address to Jesus, for reference to Jesus' power over life, and often, instead of being translated Lord, it is translated by our old word, Master. I think there is scarcely any title of Christ's that is quite so familiar to us as this, that we use so often in our prayers and perhaps in our speech about Christ to one another, nor any that we take upon our lips more often in vain—*Lord.* What does it mean that Jesus Christ should be my Lord? I heard Dr. A. J. Gordon of Boston say once, not long before he died, that there was nothing that gave him such a thrill of pleasure as to hear a young man call Jesus Christ Lord, if he had any knowledge at all of the meaning of what he was saying—Jesus Christ, Lord, the Owner of life, the utter King of life, everything yielded up to His dominating control. If Jesus Christ is my Master in the sense of being my Lord, then all the plans of my life must be laid down for His supervision and judgment and authority. I go where He sends me; I do what He tells me; I stay where He bids me. We worry ourselves so many times about our difficulty in finding the will of God. The will of God is seeking every one of us with more eagerness to discover us than we feel to find

that will. We cannot get away from the will of God if we have the least desire that the will of God should discover us and set us in the Father's place. And the man who has once called Jesus Christ Lord honestly—and no man can say that honestly except by the Spirit of God—has at once guaranteed to himself that his Lord will put him in the place where He wants him to be. It is of infinitely more consequence to our Lord that we should be where He wants us than it is to us that we should be there, and we may be sure that He will see that that which He owns is where it can be of greatest service to Him, and that He will guard alike all its hours and its place and vocation in life, if once it has yielded itself to Him as King and Lord. If Jesus Christ is our Lord He is Lord of all our thoughts. I know my own heart well enough, and yours, too, to know that Jesus Christ is not Lord of our thoughts. Read over again before you lie down to sleep to-night what Jesus Christ had to say about thinking—of the guilt of evil thinking—in the Sermon on the Mount; what He had to say with reference to certain standards of judgment that had prevailed with reference to sin, and His own views of sin as a thing not alone of the outer act, but of the inner imagination and desire, and then answer the challenge, "Can I say I am a man of an untarnished heart and unsoiled mind?" Who of us has brought every one of his thoughts into captivity and obedience to Christ? Who of

us has honestly yielded up his thinking to Jesus Christ, his Lord?

The last summer of Major Whittle's life I went in to see him one evening at Northfield, not expecting ever to see him again. He was so weak that they were watching with him day and night. Only a few days before, when trying to lift one of his arms from the coverlet, the weight of the arm proved too much, and it had fallen and broken on the bed. He lay there almost unable to move, with the red sunlight coming in and falling across the pale, wan face. The doctor and the nurse were there at the time, and he asked them to step out of the room for a few moments. He told me the days were very long, that he could not sleep more than a few hours and that he waked up every night just a little after midnight, and then had to lie alone until the sun came and the friends began to come in. I asked him what he did during all those hours. Well, he said, he gave all the time to thinking upon Christ. He thought upon Christ in the Old Testament types and prophecies; he thought about His lovely life, the sweet things He had said when He was here, all His ways with the little children and with the poor and sorrowful, and all the mighty things He had done; he thought of Him as He is now at God's right hand, and then he thought of Him as, in some sweet day, when the eastern sky grows all ruddy with the hope of His return, He will come back again.

Then he asked me what was the best thought I had had that day, apologising by adding that that was the only thing he could do now to freshen up his own thinking, inasmuch as he could not read and had only to recall what was already stored in his memory and to live upon what friends said to him. I told him I had been thinking that day of what an immense blessing it would be if every time a man's mind was released from the pressure of any objective duty and free to go to its own place, if every time it was at liberty from every external strain and could do the thing that was natural to it, it would fall back inevitably on Christ.

Yes, he said, he had often thought of that, and he quoted a quatrain:

> "As a wee bairn to its mither,
> As a little bird to its nest,
> I fain would lie down
> On my dear Saviour's breast."

And then he opened up his heart and spoke to me of Him. And I had a fresh revelation that summer evening, as the light of the setting sun streamed in over the face that was so near the vision of the great land that, after all, is not so very far away from any one of us, of the beauty, of the transforming power, the sweetness, the ineffable glory of the life that has made Jesus Christ Lord of its thought. Have you thought one single moment to-day only of Jesus?

Have we recalled to-day, spontaneously, I mean, and not when it was forced upon us by someone speaking to us, a single thing that Jesus said? Has our imagination brought back to-day a single incident or event out of the life of our Lord? What else was the imagination given to us for except to play upon Christ, except to make Christ live again, except to bring back to us every recorded event in His earthly life? I have spoken of our thoughts. I will not speak of will, of passion, of emotion, of taste, of use of time, of standards of judgment. Over all these things, too, Jesus Christ is to be Lord, if, with any honesty of heart, I call Him my Master.

The last word that is used in the New Testament and translated "Master" occurs only three times there, and twice with reference to those who deny Him. Once it is found in one of Paul's Epistles to Timothy, where he speaks of vessels meet for the Master's use. Once it appears in the Second Epistle of Peter, where he speaks of certain men who deny the Master that bought them. Once it appears in the Epistle of Jude, where he speaks of those who deny their only Master and Lord. Δεσπότης is the Greek word. "Emperor" will do for a translation for us, the One to whom we yield everything, the absolute Ruler and King whom we joyfully recognise as possessing us, all that we are and have, and ever may be, possessing the thoughts with which we awake in the morning, and the

thoughts with which we lie down to sleep in the evening, possessing our affections, all our human relationships and friendships, possessing all our tastes, possessing every activity and power of our lives—Jesus Christ enthroned as absolute Emperor of life. There is a story of one of the Napoleonic wars which relates how one of Napoleon's men was wounded on the battlefield and the bullet lodged in the cardiac region. It was before the days of anæsthetics, and they took the soldier off the battlefield and began to operate in the hope of finding the bullet. He lay with his eyes looking up into the surgeon's face, while he cut closer and closer to his heart, until at last the heart itself was nearly laid bare, and he could almost feel the wind blow in upon it, while the surgeon still probed for the bullet; and he looked up quietly in his face, and said haltingly, "Surgeon, I think if you cut much further,—you will touch the Emperor." He had him there more truly than he sat upon any throne, more truly than he sat in any judgment hall; there on the throne of the soldier's life, and affection, and will, was the Emperor. Is Jesus Christ our Master in these senses? If He is not, is He our Master at all? If He is our Master at all, He must be Master of us, Teacher of us, Leader of us, Overseer of us, Lord of us, Emperor of our lives.

I must add a few words in closing about that other set of titles in which the early Christians recognised the pre-eminence of Christ in their

lives,—the name Saviour, and those other names of our Lord that are analogous to that one. We think sometimes that that is a term for men and women who have not yet come into the Christian life. Do we think so or do we feel more in need of Jesus Christ as our Saviour now than we felt before we confessed Him as Lord and Friend? Professor Davis pointed out in his memorial address regarding Professor William Henry Green of Princeton that his Christian life began as a boy of sixteen, in a deep sense of sin and of Christ's power to save, and that sixty years of busy, useful toil in Christ's Church, instead of removing that sense, had only deepened it and made it more keen and acute. The further on we go in the Christian life the more sensible we become of our necessity for the Saviour. The unclean thought, the selfish ambition, the harsh judgment, the unkind word, the low ideal, the thousand and one things that are sin in our lives, Jesus Christ alone can save us from. We need Him to save us not alone from the coarse vice which, let us hope, we laid away from us with all temptations to it years ago; we need Him now to save us from the infinitely more subtle temptations that come with every day of growth in the Christian life. As men go on in the Christian life, temptations drop from them. Yet temptations assail them more. Temptations, after all, are a form of compliment. There is evil in this world to be slain, and God apportions it to men

as He sees them able to bear it. If He allows one man more temptation than another, He gives him no more than he is able to bear, and only as much evil as He sees that he is capable of slaying, and as year by year we go on and feel the Spirit of Christ nerving us for fresh strife and struggle, Christ answers that sense of growth by giving us more of battle with the evil one as our share of the conflict with the sin and wickedness in the world. And the purer and better we grow the more deeply shall we feel the need of Christ's salvation. I suppose Isaiah was one of the holiest men of his time, but it was he who, in the year that King Uzziah died, fell down in the temple while the house was filled with smoke, when he saw the Lord on high, and lifted up the cry, "Woe is me, I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. For mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." I suppose Paul was as clean a man as there was in his time. But it was he who pronounced himself the chiefest of sinners. I suppose there was no man among the Apostles more earnestly sincere in his desire to follow Christ than Simon Peter, and it was he who fell down on the shores of the Tiberian sea crying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" And that man is the worst hypocrite who, as he grows in his spiritual life, thinks he has been growing away from the necessity of Jesus Christ's saving work still in his life. Every

fresh vision of Christ gives a fresh vision of the man's own selfishness, and every fresh sense of divine power is a fresh sense also of human shortcoming. If Jesus Christ is to be pre-eminent with us, Jesus Christ must each day be our Saviour in a sense more real, more complete, more overwhelming than we have known Him before.

Jesus Christ, the Saviour? Yes, but more than that, too. It was not enough for Him that He should die for us. He insists also that He must live in us. Jesus Christ will be pre-eminent in our life not alone as our Saviour from sin, but as our life itself, until at last, if we will let Him, He will make that true in us which He made true in the Apostle Paul, so that we shall be able to say what now, alas, we cannot say, "For to me to live is Christ." Christ, my life! I met one summer, going home from a meeting in the mountains of Pennsylvania, a man, now in the Christian ministry. He told me, as we sat in the same seat in the car, something of his past life. He had run away from home as a boy of sixteen, and enlisted as a private soldier in the Union Army in the Civil War. He had yielded up his life to vice until sin had almost slain his character and eaten his will away. At last one dark bright day he touched bottom, and Christ caught him. And he told me that from that day there had stood out before his mind without failure by day or by night, the message that flashed

across his soul that hour, "He died my death for me that I might live His life for Him." Nineteen hundred years ago He did what He did on my account, that now I might do something, which is in a real sense the same, on His account. He made me pre-eminent then, that I might make Him pre-eminent now. Shall we not do it? Shall we not give Christ the real first place in our lives? —I do not mean professionally, I mean vitally; so that when we lie down to sleep to-night, it shall be with the living sense that Jesus Christ is our Lord, our King and Ruler. When Cyrus took captive the king of Armenia, and Tigranes, his son, with their wives and families, and carried them off to his capital, for several days they lay under sentence of death, and then, at last, on pledge of relinquishing all their claims and possessions, he set them free and let them return to their own land. It is said that on the way back they fell to discussing among themselves the glory of the court of the great conqueror, and one spoke of the splendid jewels, and another spoke of the magnanimity of the king, and, at last, Tigranes turned to his wife, who had been silent during the discussion, and said to her, "And what didst thou think of Cyrus?" "In truth," replied she, "I never saw him." "Where were thine eyes?" said he. "I fixed them," said she, "upon him"—referring to an offer that Tigranes had made—"I fixed them," said she, "upon him

whom I heard in my presence offer to lay down his life for me." She had eyes for none other than him. I wish I had eyes for none other than Christ, that in a real sense He might have with me in all things the pre-eminence. Let us give it to Him now.

II

THE BELIEVING HEART

I WISH to speak now regarding the importance of our keeping, if we have it, and of our regaining, if we have lost it, what might be described as the believing heart; and what I have to say here is suggested by the divergence between the King James Version and the Revised translation of a phrase in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. The old translation runs, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened," and the Revised Version, "The eyes of your heart."

There are a great many significant changes made in the Revised Version as compared with the old, but few of them, I think, are more significant than this one. It is illustrative of the great change that has passed over the thought of men as to our nature and the nature of the great life in which we live. We are only coming out from the slavery of notions that prevailed for many centuries. We are even yet but little delivered, still there was a time when that slavery was much denser and more servile than to-day. In his "History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century," Leslie Stephen grounds his

great admiration for Edmund Burke, whom he calls the strongest mind that has ever worked on the problems of English politics, upon the fact that he was the first English statesman to repudiate in practical politics the notion that had prevailed until his time that a man was not very much more than just a mathematical unit, that his inner life could be reduced practically to an impersonal reasoning machine, and that opinion was purely intellectual. It has been in an intellectual interest, a gain to honesty, that in politics, and in metaphysics, and in religion, we have outgrown that old conception and are unable any longer to think of a man as made up of reasoning capacity, as a mathematical reasoning creature alone, or to think of our intellect, if we separate it from the rest of our nature, as constituting the only organ by which we discover truth and create character. It has been, of course, in a moral as distinctly as in an intellectual interest. The deistic point of view, and those temperaments which the deistic view bred, although they do survive in a way in schools of physical science to-day, have been made permanently impossible for the world. We know now that our nature is vastly richer than men thought it was in the days between the translation of the King James Version and the opening of the nineteenth century. We all of us know that we come at a great deal of truth in other ways than by the use of mathematical rea-

soning; and I suggest now that in a very practical way we try to think for a bit of the indispensable importance in life of another faculty than ratiocination, which, as the revised translators recognise, really exists; a faculty which we now see and are not afraid to say that we see St. Paul had in mind as an organ for the discovery of truth and for the building up of character when he incorporated in his prayer for these Ephesian Christians his desire that the eyes of their hearts might be enlightened.

For, in the first place, the believing heart is indispensable for the discovery of truth. I do not say it is indispensable to the discovery of *all* truth, although there is a sense in which it is true that no truth can be discovered without it. I do say that the truth he needs cannot be discovered by any man unless one of the organs by which he sets about perceiving it is the heart of trust and faith. No man by mathematical reasoning can get at the whole truth. We know that at all that range of truth that is personal no man arrives by his mathematical reasoning; that he gets at that, if he ever gets at it at all, by quite other faculties than these. That is what Tennyson declares in his protest in "In Memoriam":

> "If e'er when faith had fallen asleep
> I heard a voice, 'Believe no more,'
> And heard an ever-breaking shore
> That tumbled in the godless deep,

"A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part
And like a man in wrath, the heart
Stood up and answered, 'I have felt.'"

He does not mean to shut out any one set of faculties; he simply means to assert in behalf of another set its rights in our search after and discovery of truth.

There is an illustration of what I mean in the story in the last chapter of the Gospel of John, where the disciples were out in the little boat on the sea. Precisely the same intellectual facts were presented to the minds of all those disciples. They saw a man on the shore. There was no difference in their eyesight that made one man keener than another to discern His features, and yet one of them spoke up after a moment, the others still failing to perceive Who that Man on the shore was, and said softly, "It is the Lord"; and the writer of that Gospel adds significantly that it was the disciple between whom and Jesus there was a peculiar sympathy who first discovered this. He discerned with a different set of faculties from those which the other disciples were using, or because those faculties in him were better developed than they were in the other disciples, Who this Man was Who stood upon the shore. And I suspect we would have just the same experience to-day if Jesus Christ were actually to appear. Some of us would recognise Him long before others would, and some

of us would not recognise Him at all; we would deny utterly that it was Jesus Christ, simply because we would apply to His identification a set of faculties futile to accomplish that end, and we would not have in our hearts that enlightenment of the eyes of faith that would enable us to discern what could not be discerned otherwise than in just that way.

That is one reason why so many of us live so much poorer lives than others live, simply because we are content to get at truth with a smaller number of faculties than other men use, or because the eyes of our hearts are blinded, short-sighted, less capable of vision, less accurately trained, less enlightened than the eyes of the hearts of other men. We look at a picture. Precisely the same physical conditions are there to every man's eye, but one man sees in it infinitely more than another man sees in it, because the eyes of his heart have been opened towards it. A great many men reason themselves away from the larger vision of truth. That is what Mr. Chesterton complains of in his "Twelve Types," that all of us are perpetually making the error of using the word "superficial" in a sense that is grounded on a fundamental mistake, namely, that second thoughts are best, whereas as a matter of fact, regarding most of our lives, the first instincts are the only trustworthy judgments we ever have. What we casually and instinctively feel about the look of the

skies, about the aspect of the trees, about the faces of our friends, that, we must believe, he says, and not what we subsequently reason out on the basis of all that, will remain our vital philosophy to the day of our death. That is the reason why little children are often so much more accurate judges of character than grown-up people. You can often deceive an adult regarding trustworthiness of character more easily than you can deceive a little child. There is an alertness of instinct in the child that touches the core of character more surely than any of our mathematical measurements ever do. You remember the story in the life of Robert Morrison, who was obliged to come to this country in order to secure passage as a missionary to China, and to whom Mr. Oliphant gave free passage in one of his ships. While in New York he was entertained at the home of a gentleman, who afterwards wrote in a paper, entitled "Reminiscences of Dr. Morrison," published in the New York *Observer:* "As the notice had been very short, he was placed, for the first night, in our own chamber. By the side of his bed stood a crib, in which slept my little child. On awaking in the morning, she turned, as usual, to talk to her mother. Seeing a stranger where she expected to have found her parents, she roused herself with a look of alarm; but fixing her eyes steadily upon his face, she inquired, 'Man, do you pray to God?' 'O yes, my dear,' said Mr.

Morrison, 'every day. God is my best friend.' At once reassured, the little girl laid her head contentedly on her pillow, and fell fast asleep." The little child's measurement of Morrison had been taken and she had gone in a moment home to the real inner character of the man whom she was judging, with an accuracy much quicker than the stupid ways in which you and I would have tried to get at and measure that character.

Our hearts know a thousand things that we never otherwise discover. Pascal was not speaking extremely when he wrote in his "Thoughts":

"The heart has reasons which the reason does not know. It is the heart that feels God, not the reason. There are truths that are felt, and there are truths that are proved, for we know truth not only by reason but by the intuitive conviction which may be called the heart. The primary truths are not demonstrable, and yet our knowledge of them is none the less certain. Principles are felt; propositions are proved. Truths may be above reason and yet not be contrary to reason."

Many of us, I suppose, have proved that a lie is sometimes justifiable who know in our hearts that it is not, and who to the end of our lives will distrust the liar, no matter how much rational justification we may find for his lie, be-

cause back of all our intellectual reasonings about it there is an instinct more accurate and correct than these.

After all, love—one real, great love, by which a man enters into the infinite with his life, is a far more potent solvent of doubts than all of the speculations he can spin out of the spider-body of his thought. Real love, the breaking loose of the man's true under-nature, the real delivery of the man to himself and to God,—that sets more men free to the truth than any mathematical attempt to demonstrate propositions or to unveil the unseen. The believing heart for many of us, for all of us, is the only road by which we shall come to the truth that is most vital to life.

The believing heart, in the second place, is ever essential to the living of a consistent and real life. There never was yet in the world an absolutely consistent infidel. Life would break down for the man who did not live practically on faith, however much theoretically he may cast it out of his life. You remember the verses which have been wrongly attributed to Charles Kingsley:

"There is no unbelief!
Whoever plants a seed beneath the sod,
And waits to see it push away the clod,
He trusts in God.

"Whoever says, when clouds are in the sky,
'Be patient, heart, light breaketh by and by,'
Trusts the Most High.

BRITISH LIBRARY COLLEGE

"Whoever lies down on his couch to sleep,
Content to lock each sense in slumber deep,
Knows God will keep.

"Whoever says 'to-morrow,' 'the unknown,'
'The future'—trusts unto that Power alone
He dares disown.

"The heart that looks on when the eyelids close,
And dares to live when life has only woes,
God's comfort knows.

"There is no unbelief:
And still by day and night, unconsciously,
The heart lives by the faith the lips decry,
God knoweth why."

It seems to me a man may argue against infidelity on the simple ground of its absolute inconsistency with honesty and integrity of nature. You cannot succeed, no man ever yet succeeded, in living a faithless life, and for a man to commit himself to a philosophy that excludes the possibility of faith from life is to necessitate a contradiction in his soul, for he cannot live at all and live with no faith. To live a consistent life or any life a man has to make room somewhere in him for a believing heart of trust.

It is the only way to live, not a consistent life alone, but a life that is real. To believe, as we do and must, and yet to play the sceptic, is just as truly to lead an insincere and hypocritical life, except that it is unconsciously done, as in the case of the man who professes to be what he is not, who claims to wear the badge of

3791

Christ's purity while he lives his life of sin. The believing heart is essential to men and women if they will live a real life. As one thinks of the materialistic attitude of some professors of science in our colleges there comes to his mind the protest of Walt Whitman in behalf of the faith that is back of the figures:

"When I heard the learned astronomer,
When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,
When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and measure them,
When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with much applause in the lecture room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,
In the mystical moist night air, and from time to time,
Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars."

No man can break away from the unreality of the mechanical chains of half-thinking, away from the view that would make him a mere physiological or intellectual machine, into the real life and discover his soul without feeling the believing heart that is in him expand to lay hold on the noble ranges of a real life.

Now, I do not mean, of course, that a man should have a credulous heart. I believe that the most credulous heart in the world is the unbelieving heart, that the man who is most careful about truth, the man who knows best the canons

by which to discriminate it, the man who is most cautious about what he accepts, is the man who has a believing heart. The believing heart shuts us out from the possibility of believing a thousand follies toward which the man of unbelieving heart is credulous. A few years ago we received in the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions an application for appointment as a medical missionary from a young doctor. He sent in response to questions a list of references whom the Board might consult regarding his adaptation for missionary work, and the Board sent to each of these men, of course, a list of questions. Among the answers that came back was quite a long and outspoken reply from a doctor in an inland city in the State of New York. With candour and evident honesty he answered the inquiries, and then he went on at the end to say:

"I do not attend church any more. I formerly did, but stopped because I saw too much hypocrisy and I refused to be a hypocrite myself, so I think you can trust my word."

On the basis of the testimonials this applicant was discouraged, and the matter rested for a time, and then I wrote to the doctor who had sent this. I told him that I was writing to him not in any official capacity, but, if he would let me, just as a man to a man, and I wanted to dis-

cuss with him, if he was willing, the question that he had raised. I said in substance:

"You do not regard yourself as justified in refusing to do the good which your knowledge of medicine enables you to do because yours, of all professions, perhaps because of its very nobility, has so many charlatans and quacks in it. You would not think of pleading this hypocrisy as a reason why you should refuse to be a doctor and as a doctor to do good in the world and alleviate human suffering."

I said some more things that are not essential, and this is the letter that I received in reply:

"I thank you very much for your sincere letter of recent date, but I fear you have undertaken too tough a job even for the entire Board of Foreign Missions. The reason stated in my testimonial was of course the truth, and perhaps was the primary cause of my present state of mind. I am writing frankly, as you did. You will notice I said 'too much hypocrisy.' I can stand for some, as, of course, it is necessary to do, as you point out. But in my opinion there is more of it in church than in everything else combined. Look over an ordinary congregation in almost any walk of life. Take the men; seven out of ten do not do or try to do as they practically claim to do. A man in attending church,

in my opinion, acknowledges Christ as his Master and Saviour and agrees to do as nearly as possible what Christ would do in the same circumstances. Don't you think nine out of ten would be nearer? Perhaps my definition of a hypocrite is too exact, shall I say? Perhaps I should relax it a little. But a person who says one thing Sunday and another Monday is a hypocrite. A man who goes to church on Sunday and prays to be forgiven for the sins he has done during the week and then goes and does them over again is a hypocrite. Am I too severe? Take the church of which you are a member; scan the congregation carefully; does not the result surprise you? Mind you, I don't want you to think only of the 'scoundrels' and 'charlatans.' But entirely outside and separate from this is an insurmountable obstacle. I am not a Christian. I do not believe in a personal God. I believe that every man should do as nearly as possible what is right, as laid down by Moses and Jesus. I believe that Jesus was the greatest and best man that we have any record of, but I *do not* believe that He was the Son of God, for I do not believe that God can have a son, any more than 'Nature' or 'Electricity' can have. I believe that the universe is governed by immutable laws and is ruled by an all-powerful force. I believe that this force is what we call 'electricity.' This statement must seem absurd to you and you must think that my brain is turned, but I assure you

that this is not the case. I have read and pondered on this subject for five or six years, yes, ten years. My religion is all I need. I feel absolutely satisfied with it. What more do I want? I threshed over this subject more than once with my pastor, who is one of the brightest minds I ever knew, and he has acknowledged that I ought not to go to church, and he has said, 'Almost thou persuadest me.' If at any time you wish to hear from me further, write me. I would be glad to hear from you anyway. I am not a scoffer at religion, nor do I force my belief on others. Probably not more than a dozen people know what I believe, but if you wish, in the future, I will explain my reasons for my belief."

This will suffice as an illustration of the credulity of the unbelieving heart. On this view, when a man looks at a great landscape or the shimmer of the moonlight on rippling water and feels little thrills of joy run through his soul, it is electricity. When his little child creeps up into his arms, and the tears of a great love fill his eyes and his heart warms and glows as wave after wave of God's goodness sweeps over him, it is electricity. When four or five thousand men witness and cheer some great feat of heroism, when a martyr dies for his faith, or a man lays down his life for his friends, it is electricity. Can there be anything more credulous than the unbelieving heart? It would be impossible for

us to lend ourselves to any such opinions as these. Why? Not because our minds are trained differently so much as because our hearts are believing hearts. The only road to a sincere and complete life, a life that stands squarely, that is ready for all the facts of the world and the soul, is in the believing heart. You remember Von Sturmer's lines prefixed to Richard Jeffries' "Story of My Heart":

"Dim woodlands made him wiser far
Than those who thresh their barren thought
With flails of knowledge dearly bought,
Till all his soul shone like a star

"That flames at fringe of heaven's bar,
Where breaks the surge of space unseen
Against Hope's veil that hangs between
Love's future and the woes that are."

That is what the believing heart does for a man.

And, once more, it is the believing heart alone that makes it possible for men to find the will of God. The will of God is not a proposition to be demonstrated by syllogisms; the will of God is an obedience discoverable only to sympathy, and no one of us will ever find the will of God for his life unless he finds it by the believing heart that opens to God and that responds with filial alacrity to every intimation of His will to us. A Christian lawyer from Cripple Creek, Col., told me once, as we talked over the question of how

a man might get his life righted, of an experience of his own years ago, when in a great deal of perplexity he had gone to his old pastor to ask him for help as to how he might get his life directed aright. He said the old man simply turned to the Thirty-second Psalm and read him these two verses:

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will counsel thee with mine eye upon thee. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose trappings must be bit and bridle to hold them in, else they will not come near unto thee."

Then my friend said the old man shut up his Bible and turned away. At first he felt no little resentment at his pastor for this curt way of replying to his inquiry, but when he went away and thought it over he saw that the whole secret of a right life lay just here, that the only way in which God could ever guide a man was not by some mechanical instruction, not by fitting a bit into the man's mouth and pulling him this way and that with a rein, but by planting in his heart His own Spirit and letting that Spirit guide him. The boy goes away to college from his father. How is his father to shape the boy's life? There is no code of instruction that he can give him that will cover all the emergencies and exigencies of it. He can only try to make that boy his boy, so that when he goes

the father's character will express itself in the boy's life. I remember Dr. Trumbull's telling years ago of a Connecticut lad who had grown up on a farm until he was about twenty years of age, and then was going away into the city to make his own fortune. On the last Sunday evening before he left home Dr. Trumbull said the old father called his boy and said: "John, you are going away from home tomorrow to the city. I would like to have a little talk with you before you go, if you wouldn't mind." Well, the boy and the father had always lived together a common life, and the boy went out with his father to walk around over the farm and hear his father's last counsel. And they walked down to one of the meadows where the boy had played from his infancy, up over the hillside, where they watched the sun set, as he had watched it for many years; down through the fields and the orchards until they came, after an hour's walk, to the back of the house again, and the old man had said never a word to his son. And when at last they came to the gate of the garden and were about to go in, the old man turned to his son and said: "John, I have only one thing to say to you—always do as you have a mind to." What better could he say? That is the only way you can guide a life. You cannot guide a life the way you would guide a beast; you must guide a life in life's way; and it is just so that we will

get our guidance, if we ever get it, from our Father. "My son," He will say to us, "have you the mind of Christ?" "I hope so, Father," will be our reply. "Well," He will say, "always do as you have a mind to," and will say nothing more to us. Unto the end of our days we will get no clearer divine guidance for our lives than that, and will need none.

Of the great Christians of the last generation, George Müller would stand out first before many minds as an unreasoning, superstitious mystic. May I read you out of his own life his account of how he ascertained the will of God?

"1. I seek at the beginning to get my heart into such a state that it has no will of its own in regard to a given matter.

"Nine-tenths of the trouble with people is just here. Nine-tenths of the difficulties are overcome when our hearts are ready to do the Lord's will, whatever it may be. When one is truly in this state, it is usually but a little way to the knowledge of what His will is.

"2. Having done this, I do not leave the result to feeling or simple impression. If I do so, I make myself liable to great delusions.

"3. I seek the will of the Spirit of God through, or in connection with, the Word of God. The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone without the Word, I lay myself open to great delusions also.

If the Holy Ghost guides us at all, He will do it according to the Scriptures and never contrary to them.

"4. Next I take into account providential circumstances. These often plainly indicate God's will in connection with His Word and Spirit.

"5. I ask God in prayer to reveal His will to me aright.

"6. Thus, through prayer to God, the study of the Word, and reflection, I come to a deliberate judgment according to the best of my ability and knowledge, and if my mind is thus at peace, and continues so after two or three more petitions, I proceed accordingly.

"In trivial matters, and in transactions involving most important issues, I have found this method always effective."

Surely in this method George Müller reveals himself as a man of as great practical judgment, of as sound discernment of the method of the Christian life as any Christian you could find in this or any day. And the same method will work in our case. If, to-day and to-morrow, we want to know what God's will for our life is, we will find it only as the eyes of our heart are enlightened that they may see the things that are excellent in the sight of Jesus Christ.

And lastly, the believing heart is the secret of the possession of the things of chiefest value in

life. It is the secret of strength and power. Can you find in your acquaintance, now, or in all human history, a man of power who was not a man of a believing heart? Such men may not have been Christians, but they had the attitude of heart which should have made them so. Whether Abraham Lincoln was a very evangelical believer or not I do not know, but the heart of a Christian was in him. He believed; the eyes of the inner vision had been enlightened. He walked through those dark days before his flock as a shepherd. He stood in the midst of those surging seas like a great rock on whose base the waves broke with futility. He stood there with power and strength, holding the love and confidence of men, four-square to every wind. Why? Because his heart rested on God. You remember the laconic telegram he sent to the war governor of Illinois. Governor Yates had written a despairing letter to the great man, whose patient heart was already bearing all that human heart could bear, complaining that hope was gone. All that Lincoln sent back in reply was the brief message, "Dick, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." And if one of us is a stronger man than another, if he has more power over other men, if he is one of those men who come in time to stand out above other men with something of the eternal power of the hills, so that other men rest their lives on him and say, "While he believes I can believe," it is be-

cause deep in that man's life the eyes of his heart have been enlightened to see, and he lives by faith.

The believing heart is the only secret of love. No one of us will ever learn to love who has not a heart of trust and faith. And the best things there are in the world are denied to us if the eyes of our heart being unenlightened we have not learned in the school of Christ to love. And in those days when the storms beat on our lives and we do not know whether the clouds will ever break and the blue sky shine again; in the times when it seems as though the very foundations had dropped out beneath us; in those times when we are numbered with the men whom Professor Drummond describes in one of his talks as the men who fight their last fight with their backs against the wall, with no room, not another step, to recede—if we shall have peace at all in that hour, we shall get it through our believing hearts. I read somewhere, years ago, of a Swiss martyr who was condemned to be burned, and as he stood, before the fire was kindled around his stake, he turned to the judge who had condemned him and said: "Sir, I have one last request to make of you. It is that you will put your hand on my heart first, and then lay it on your own, and then tell the people which heart beats more violently." Then he stood in the midst of the fagots and the flames, tranquil, unmoved, serene. Through the smoke

and the heat he endured as seeing with his heart's eyes by faith the invisible.

Some of us have lost it, haven't we? We would give anything if we could slip back across the years and get it again—that great heart of trust that we had when we were little children. Suspiciousness, furtiveness, doubt, indirectness, unease, all those things which we know when we think about them are the curse of character, have slipped into our lives. Maybe we feel the treasure going now. Whether it is going or gone, we may have it again to-day. Shall we not face any sacrifice rather than lose the believing heart out of life? What other loss can equal this?

"Upon the white sea sand
There sat a pilgrim band,
Telling the losses that their lives had known,
While evening waned away
From breezy cliff and bay,
And the strong tides went out with weary moan.
One spoke with quivering lip
Of a fair freighted ship
With all his household, to the deep gone down!
But one had wilder woe
For a fair face, long ago
Lost in the darker depths of a great town.
There were some who mourned their youth
With a most loving ruth
For the brave hopes and memories ever green;
And one upon the West
Turned an eye that would not rest

For far-off hills whereon its joy had been.
Some talked of vanished gold,
Some of proud honors told.
Some spake of friends who were their friends no more,
And one of a green grave
Beside a foreign wave,
That made him sit so lonely on the shore.
But when their tales were done,
There spake among them one,
A stranger, seeming from all sorrow free:
'Sad losses ye have met.
But mine is heavier yet,
For the believing heart has gone from me.'
'Alas!' those pilgrims said,
'For the living and the dead,
For fortune's cruelty, for love's sure cross,
For the wrecks of land and sea!
But howe'er it came to thee,
Thine, stranger, is life's last and heaviest loss,
For the believing heart has gone from thee—
Ah! the believing heart has gone from thee!'"

Oh, let it not go to-day! Under the trees, in our rooms, in the city street, let us kneel down if it has gone and pray that it may come back to us again as we open up our hearts of childlike trust unto the Saviour in whom we believe.

III

CHRIST'S APPEAL TO THE DOUBTING HEART

WHAT we have just been considering generally is brought home to us concretely in the Master's appeal to the man who represented so well among the Apostles the hesitant spirit of our own day. The Christian centuries which intervened between the Apostolic age and the Reformation are often spoken of as the era of Peter. The Christian centuries that have elapsed since the Reformation have been spoken of as the era of Paul. Some have suggested that as the era of Peter waned and gave place to the era of Paul, so the era of Paul is waning to give place in our day to the era of John. It may be true, and yet one is sometimes inclined to think that this is the age of Thomas. Above all the other Apostles he seems to embody those types of character which are finding dominant expression in our own day. He was a man in whom the speculative, reasoning nature was above the vital; a man who naturally took a hesitant attitude; a critical man; a man full of scruples, whose opinionative nature ruled the rest of his life. Every time Thomas appears in the Gospel of John he

is shown as a man wanting the vitalities and the optimisms of the believing nature. He was a man in whom the critical and opinionative disposition had gained the mastery over the trustful, hopeful, childlike disposition of faith.

He appears before us in his true character especially in the scene described in the twentieth chapter of John. He had not been present when Jesus had appeared to the ten Apostles, and when they told him of it he at once replied: "I will not believe that He is risen from the dead unless I can put my finger into the print of the nails in His hands, and unless I can thrust my hand into the wound in His side." It was a very coarse way of stating even Thomas's desire for some physical evidence of Jesus's resurrection, and it was an indication once again of his want of that trustful disposition which would have led an ordinary man to believe the testimony of the ten Apostles and of Mary.

On the eighth day after this Jesus appeared in the upper room when Thomas was present. Jesus then repeated in their bald detail the conditions that Thomas had laid down. "Thomas," He said, "here I am. Reach hither thy finger and put it into My hand. Reach hither thy hand and put it into My side, and be not faithless, but believing."

Now it is worth noting what the charge was that Jesus laid upon Thomas. He did not criticise Thomas's want of faith in any particular

event; He criticised Thomas's moral and intellectual disposition. He did not say, "Now that the evidence has been presented to you, believe in this fact of My resurrection"; He said, "Now that you have had evidence to convince you of this one fact, can you not lay aside your speculative, your debating, your opinionative disposition, and have a faithful and believing temper, such as my other disciples here have? Be not a faithless, but a believing man."

Then, strange to say, this man forgot all about the conditions that he laid down, on the fulfilment of which alone he said he was willing to believe in the resurrection of Jesus, and without any desire to apply the test he fell on his knees, crying out, "My Lord and my God." He was satisfied, not with the presentation to his physical senses of the evidence that he had demanded, but with the touch upon his personality of the personality of Jesus. His answer is the sublimest confession in the Gospels; it affirms just what he had been doubting—"My Lord and my God."

Now, we have here the two great elements of Christian life and faith and thought. On the one hand the offered personality of Christ, waiting to touch our personalities; on the other hand the accepting will of Thomas answering to the offered personality of Jesus. These are the two great facts of life, of thinking, of belief, of religion, distinctly of our Christian faith.

A divine personality is offered to the heart of

man. This is what revelation is. The substance of revelation is not truth; the substance of revelation is person. What God was doing through all the years of the Old Testament dispensation was not slowly making men familiar with a few veracious facts, or any system of principles or truth. He was showing men Himself. The communication of truth is only a means to the communication of person, of spirit, of life. The whole Old Testament dispensation was just a long attempt on the part of God to reveal Himself to the heart of man under and over certain laws, under and over certain precepts, under and over certain principles or commandments. When Moses asked His name, and who he should say had sent him when he went as the ambassador of God, Jehovah said to him, "I AM THAT I AM, and when anyone asketh thee who sent thee, thou shalt say, I AM hath sent me." The God of character, the God of person, the God of being; not the God of description, not the God of metaphysical idea, not the God of intellectual notion; the real living God of spirit and person and life, as He said to Moses, was striving through all the years of the Old Testament history to reveal Himself to men.

When Christ came, therefore, it was in precisely the same way, as a self-revelation to life. He convinced Thomas in the little upper room—Thomas, who thought he would not be convinced except by certain physical evidences pre-

sented to his senses—by the touch of His own personality upon Thomas's spiritual nature, and Thomas answered by the surrender of his own life to Christ, "My Lord and my God."

Christ addresses His appeal to the whole personality, the willing nature, rather than to man's opinion as supreme over the rest of his life. You can see all through Christ's earthly history, in the method of His dealing with men, how He strove to exalt this conception of His mission, and how He sought to enable men to meet Him on the plane of full personality, of highest testimony. On the night of the supper Philip broke in upon the answer which Jesus was giving to Thomas's difficulty with the request, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." He wanted some physical manifestation of the Father, some revelation of Him that would coerce the senses, that would lead opinion into bondage and force it, irrespective of the integrity and dignity of the complete nature, to assent to the presence of God and the claims of God.

Christ's answer was: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself, but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the

Father in Me: or else—if that is too high, and your heart does not answer at once to My heart, if the spirit of man that is in you does not instantly respond to the Spirit of God that is in Me, well, I will drop down to a lower plane—believe Me for the very works' sake."

Our Lord has every kind of evidence to present to man. The man who cannot believe save on the plane of historic proof can find evidence enough on that plane to support Christ's claims; but what Christ strove for constantly with men was to get them to assent to His claims upon their lives on the high ground of the self-revelation in Him of God the Father to man the son, of the Spirit of God to the spirit of man that is within men, that was born of the Spirit of God, and that finds its true life and anchorage only in rich, responsive answer to the Spirit of God.

The same principle was manifested in the parable of the Good Shepherd. He had told the Jews that His sheep knew His voice and followed Him. It was the only way in which they discovered that He was their shepherd or showed Him that they were His sheep. Every one whom the Father had given Him would recognise His voice and come to Him, and He would know each one of them by name. That was too high for the Jews, and John tells us that they took up stones to stone Him. Then He drops down again, as He did with Philip, to the lower level

of argument, and says, "For which of My works do you stone Me?" They said, "For none of Your works, but because You, being a man, make Yourself God." He took up their thought, not denying that He had made Himself God, but contending that the works He had done were in themselves sufficient evidence that He was the Son of God, and that He had the right to make these claims on the lives of men that He was making on theirs. He would drop down to the evidence of Thomas, to the plane of Thomas's desire, whenever men insisted that He should, but only when He had exhausted His attempt to get the hearts of men to answer straight and clear to His heart. But when Jesus had once offered this lower physical evidence to Thomas, Thomas wanted none of it. He had come now into the presence of Christ, where he was able to take in the kind of testimony he had not been able to recognise before, and he answered straight out of his own soul to the soul of Christ.

I have a friend who has a distorted hand. Do you think it is necessary for me every time I meet that friend to ask him to let me feel his distorted hand to make sure that it is he? I know that when he and I sit down together and our hearts have touched, that he and I are there, without any gross sensual evidence gained by feeling his withered hand. It was even so with Jesus. He would let men feel, if they wanted,

the nail print in His hand. He would allow men, if they must, butcher-like to thrust their hands into the wound in His side; but when once He had offered Himself to men for the satisfaction of their desire for that kind of testimony, their desire for that kind of testimony was gone, and they fell down on their faces before Him, and the heart of man answered to the heart of Christ with Thomas's cry, "My Lord and my God."

Now, because Jesus Christ addressed His word in this way to the highest in man, to what is in man of God's nature, He was constantly defining faith in properly corresponding terms. There are very few passages in the Gospels where Christ uses the word "faith" or the word "believe" to describe an intellectual attitude toward certain truth. Constantly, Christ uses faith as a term that is not applicable to the relation of a man to an opinion, or of a man to a thing. He uses faith as a term that is applicable only to the relation of a person to a person. I believe, not things that people tell me, I believe the people themselves, and my belief in them is faith. A little child, knowing very little of life, sits on the father's knee learning its first lessons of life, and believes what the father tells it. Now its belief in what the father says is not an act of faith, it is a fruit of faith. It is the relationship of confidence between the child and the father that makes the child believe anything

the father says, and its belief in what the father tells is simply one of the accessory sequences of its faith in the father. Faith, with Jesus, is personal confidence in Himself. Faith, with Jesus, is the answer of a man's soul to His soul, the touch of a man's personality upon His personality, the surrender of a willing life to Jesus Christ as its Lord and its King.

Now, there is nothing unreasonable in this view of faith. As a matter of fact, all life rests on faith of just this kind. Business life does. What makes prosperity? The fact that times are good? Not necessarily. Men's belief that times are good. What creates a panic? Hard times? Not at all, of necessity, but man's belief that hard times are coming, man's want of confidence, man's loss of faith. It often happens that the years after a panic are really more arduous years, less prosperous years than the years during which the panic was upon men. It is the loss of faith, the loss of the atmosphere of trust, the loss of the spirit of confidence that destroys society. It is the presence of faith, of confidence, of trust, not primarily of opinion, not primarily of intellectual agreement, that holds society together. Opinion has its place, but it is not the first place.

It is the spirit of faith and of trust that underlies our physical life and makes it possible. The veriest sceptic, as we have seen, is living by trust. He is trusting in the continuity of nature,

which is only another name, and a poorer one, for the fidelity of God. He is trusting to this law or that, which is only an impersonal statement of some one of God's minor activities. He trusts that his food will work out certain results; that taking sleep will produce certain consequences; that when he walks out on the face of the earth the stars will not fall down on him and crush him. I say the most honest sceptic that ever lived was compelled by the very necessities of his life to confine his scepticism in the honest application of it to only part of his life. It is impossible for man to live except in the spirit of confidence and faith.

Far more is this true in the realm of our higher life. We live, as Paul says, by faith. We live by fellowship. We live by confidence. We live by trust. We live, not by reasoning out God's dealing with us, not by the adjustment of certain mental opinions—no man gets more than an inch or two toward the goal by that means—but by the willing adjustment of the volitional life to a trust in God and the laws of God.

And, accordingly, Jesus Christ in preaching His gospel made His preaching pre-eminently just an assertion of Himself. "Believe Me," He said. "Believe in Me." We see this in all its beauty in the last paragraph of the ninth chapter of John, in the story of the man born blind. After the man was cast out from the synagogue Jesus found him, and said unto him, "Dost thou

believe in the Son of God?" And he said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe?" And Jesus said, "Thou hast both seen Him, and He it is that speaketh with thee." Immediately the man responded, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped Him.

Even those parts of Christ's teaching which are admired by people most hostile to Christ's claims are fullest of Christ's assertiveness. I wonder if you can find in all of Christ's teachings anything more assertive of His claims, of His supremacy, of His uniqueness, than the Sermon on the Mount. And so at other times, "I am the light of the world. I am the bread of God which came down out of heaven to give life to the world. I am the Messiah. I am the Son of God. I and my Father are one."

Jesus Christ presented Himself in this way, because that is just what He came here for. Christ was not the preacher of the message, Christ was the message. Christianity differentiates itself from every other religion. Christ is His own religion. A man who entered His religion entered Christ. The man who began to learn His religion learned Christ. The man who began to feed himself with what that religion provided, ate of Christ's flesh and drank of Christ's blood. And so Christ made His word a direct appeal to the will of men, to the whole living nature of men, and never once an appeal merely to that part of man which lies within the

sphere of his opinionative powers. Jesus Christ spoke straight home to the whole life of man and demanded that man surrender all his will and his whole life to Him. Belief, He told men, was an activity of their whole nature, and not a mere matter of their thought. Belief, He told them, was the great and necessary thing. A few acts of outside conduct, a few precepts as to behaviour, these were comparatively trifling matters with Him, because the great causative forces of conduct are the important things. What He wanted, as He told them, was to lay His hand on that spring of life within, out of which came the things which defile the true life and which is the source of all man's external conduct and behaviour.

Christ spoke right home to the personalities of those to whom He spoke. In the midst of great crowds He would separate Himself and one man immediately from all the crowd, that He might bear home to the heart of that one man His personal offer of life. He would see in the man's face, He would catch in the man's bearing, some faint intimation that the man was hearing, though far off, the true note of His voice, and perhaps recognising in it the accents of the Father's voice, and straightway Christ spoke His message home to the heart and life of that man.

He never tired of insisting, as He spoke to the Jews, that their difficulty was not an intellectual

difficulty. It was a moral and vital one. "Ye will not come to Me," He said, "that ye might have life. Ye cannot hear My voice because you are not willing to hear My voice. Ye are not of My Father, and therefore ye will not hear Me. Ye are the sons of the devil and the works of your father ye will do. I come in My Father's name and ye will not receive Me. Some other man will come in his own name and him ye will receive." And so, over and over again, He told them that what He wanted of them as a test of their acceptance of Him was not mimic-like repetition of a few formulas, was not crying out in the market-places, "Lord, Lord," it was a keeping of His commandments. "Ye are my friends if you bring your lives into surrender and obedience to Me." "If ye love Me, ye will keep my commandments. If ye love Me, ye will do what I have commanded you, and My Father will love you, and We will come to you and will make Our abode with you."

Jesus Christ is making His appeal to the whole of our life; He is offering us the whole of Himself to be appropriated by the whole of ourselves. He is offering us His life in exchange for ours. He is offering us Himself in exchange for ourselves, His divinity for our humanity; and all that He asks of us is not that we should adjust ourselves to a certain opinionative attitude toward Him—we shall do that all right in time if we do this other—but that we should

bring ourselves, as He Himself put it, into the temperament and atmosphere of a little child. "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall never enter, ye shall not even recognise the kingdom of Heaven."

But some one may say: "Is opinion, then, of no account? May I think just what I please, so long as I have right feelings toward Christ?" By no means. What a man thinks is of vast account. It is one of Christ's own questions, "What think ye of Christ?" Christ Himself was always insisting that His appeal was addressed to the will of man as a reasonable will. He made appeal in reasonable ways. He assumed that man himself, even in his most volitional life, is a reasoning creature, and He came down to deal with men, in a measure no other great religious teacher ever did, upon the plane of man's inquiring apprehension, and ready to make perfectly clear to men the enigmas of His faith in His own good time. What I insist on is that we are wrong in subjugating the will, the life, the power of vision, the inalienable instincts of being, and Christ Himself to our mere opinionative nature; that we do despite to our own life when we trample underfoot our own constitution, when we pick out wilfully one department of our life and deliberately make all the rest of our life the slave of that; when in this day we keep insisting that physical evidence, the meanest and grossest kind of all evidence, is the

only evidence which can accredit truth to us. What I insist on is that Jesus Christ makes His appeal to-day just as He did in the days of Thomas, not to the putting of fingers in the nail prints of His hands not to the putting of hands in the spear wound in His side, but to the sense that will be born in men whenever, with the heart of a child, they desire to be made like Christ, when they believe that they are Christ's friends and that Christ is theirs; when they accept a moral attitude, a spiritual atmosphere, the feeling of love and of kinship and of desire, the surrender of life that led Thomas to cry, "My Lord and my God." This is the foundation of spiritual life, the foundation of all true life of whatsoever sort.

Just in proportion as we understand this, and perceive that Jesus Christ appeals to the highest and most splendid in us, will He be able to lead us out into His own fulness of power. "If any man will do My will," He said, "intellectually he shall be freed from difficulty in time. He that believeth on Me, out from the depths of his life shall pour torrents of living water. He that believeth on Me shall do not only what I have done, but greater things than these shall he do because I go unto My Father."

Jesus is offering Himself to us in this vital way, not in any dead, mechanical fashion; not as a physical body laid outside of us, to be handled as men handle the bodies of men which are

shells of men, not men; but as the living Spirit of God, sent here to touch the living spirits of men. And those of us who are His sheep will hear His voice and will follow Him. And that is the only essential thing. Everything else follows in its own good time, and doubt, perplexity, hesitancy over this matter of opinion or that matter, find their full solution in the lives of the men who are willing to do His will. Shairp gathers up what I have been saying in his verses:

"I have a life with Christ to live,
And, ere I live it, must I wait
Till learning can clear answer give
Of this and that book's date?

"I have a life in Christ to live;
I have a death in Christ to die;
And must I wait till science give
All doubts a full reply?

"Nay; rather, while the sea of doubt
Is raging wildly round about,
Questioning of life and death and sin,
Let me but creep within
Thy fold, O Christ, and at Thy feet
Take but the lowest seat;
And hear Thine awful voice repeat,
In gentlest accents heavenly sweet,
'Come unto me and rest;
Believe me and be blest.'"

IV

THE HEART'S RESPONSE TO THE MASTER'S CALL

FROM one point of view, there are two Christs. There is the Christ within. And the experience of the life in which Christ dwells is expressed in Paul's great words: "To me to live is Christ." "When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Then there is another Christ—the outer Christ. Of course the Christ who would dwell within is the Christ without, until the door of the life is opened to let Him in; but even when He has been admitted, there is an outer Christ still—a Christ who lays a law upon the life as well as lives a life within the life; and the words of the experience of the outer Christ are such words as these: "A new commandment give I unto you." "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

From one point of view there are two Christs. And yet we know that there is only one Christ, and that the outer is the inner Christ, that the Christ who dwells within is the Christ, also, to

Whom our eyes are turned without. They make a vain endeavour who try to get along with one or the other of these two Christs, excluding the one with Whom they wish to have little to do. Those who think they can have the Christ without, without also accepting the Christ within, or the Christ within without also accepting the Christ without, can have neither Christ in His fulness.

Now, the call of the Christ of the inner life is such a word as this: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." And the call of the outer Christ is such a word as this: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." We must often be confused by the effort of men to keep these two Christs apart, and perhaps there are few of us who are not often thrown into confusion by our own thought of a Christ within and a Christ without, whose missions we attempt to keep separate one from the other. The two Christs are one. Is there any call of the common Christ, following which we shall be able to surmount the difficulties which come from trying to sever the call of the Christ within from the call of the Christ without? I think there is such a call, and that it was equally the primal and the final call of Jesus to men: "Follow Me!"

Our Lord walked by the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and saw Simon and Andrew his

brother casting a net in the sea, for they were fishers, and He said to them, "Follow Me," and they left their nets and followed Him. Walking further, He saw John and James, his brother, mending their nets in their boat, and He called to them, and they left their father Zebedee and followed Him. A few days later, as He came out of a city in which He had been preaching, He passed a publican sitting at the receipt of custom, and He said to him, "Follow Me," and he rose and left his money tables and followed Him. And it came to pass, as they were on their way to Jerusalem, that one came to Him and said, "I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." And He answered and said unto him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." And He said unto another, "Follow Me," and he said, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father." He said to him, "Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." And another said to Him, "Lord, I will follow Thee; but suffer me first to go and say farewell to them that are at home at my house"; and He said to him, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." And as He went on in the way a young man came to Him, and said, "Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" And He said to him, "Why

askest thou Me concerning that which is good? One is good, even God. Keep the commandments." And the man said to Him, "Which commandments?" And He replied, "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt honour thy father and mother, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And the young man said to Him, "All these have I observed; what lack I yet?" He said to him, "If thou wouldst be perfect, go and sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow Me."

Now, these were all calls of Christ to men practically at His first meetings with them; but if you study the Gospels, you will find that Christ's call to men who had been with Him for three long years was still the same, "Follow Me." On the last night of His intercourse with them, He knew no better way to sound them the call of the inner and the outer life alike than in these same terms: "For where I go," He said, "ye cannot follow Me now. Your discipleship must be incomplete for a little while; ye shall follow Me afterwards." And Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow Thee now? I am ready to go with Thee both to prison and to death." And even at the end, when He walked with Simon Peter, in one of the last of all His interviews which are preserved to us in

the Gospels, in the grey dawn of the early morning by the shores of Galilee, as He welcomed him back to the new life and the new service, He said to him, "Follow Me." "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me."

That was Christ's call to men. He did not say to them, "Will you join My organisation?" For at first He had no organisation to invite men to join. He did not say to them, "Will you accept these views that I am proclaiming?" For when He first invited men to follow Him, He had as yet proclaimed no views. He asked men to join Him. He did not ask them to join an institution; He did not ask them to believe in His opinions; He asked men to join Him and to believe in Him. It was on the personal relationship to Himself that He laid all the emphasis; and even when years had passed away and Christ's organisation had begun to develop and His views had been set before men and He called them into His life, He did not say to them even then, "I wish you would accept these views of Mine; they are the only truths." He did not say to them, "I wish you would join this fellowship of Mine; it is the only fellowship." He still said to them, "Follow Me." At the close of His teaching it was still the thought of being personally united to Himself that He would have understood to be the fundamental

thought of His kingdom. "I know My sheep, and My sheep know Me, and they follow Me." And when He set before His disciples in the twelfth chapter of John's Gospel, with a clearness and a fulness of intimation which He had scarcely used before, the thought of His death, His crucifixion, and His larger power, He still spoke to them in these terms. It was not, "Believe now in these great views of My going away, and all that for which My going stands," but, "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also shall My servant be."

It is worth noting that Jesus Christ is the only person in the world who dares to say to men, "Follow Me." No other founder of a great religion has based his religion on a personal following of himself. Confucianism, as a religion, consists merely in the practice of maxims, in memorising them, and in the moulding of life on the basis of those ideas, now twenty-five centuries old. It is a religion of precepts and antiquarianism. Buddhism is a religion of a method. Buddha proclaimed nothing else than the discovery of a way; and by his philosophy we are to learn simply the method of satisfaction and absorption. Mohammedanism is the religion of a book and a formula. Twelve hundred years ago Mohammed wrote it all down, never to be changed while the centuries pass, so that

"Though the world rolls on from range to range,
And realms of thought expand,
The letter stands without expanse or change,
Stiff as a dead man's hand.
While as the life blood fills the growing form
The Spirit Christ has shed
Flows through the ripening ages quick and warm,
More felt than heard or read."

Among all the teachers and leaders of men Jesus has dared to stand out and to cry over the tumult of life's sea, "Follow Me! Follow Me!"

I do not wonder that that call made on the first disciples the impression which it did make. In the first chapter in John's Gospel we read that He was minded to go into Galilee, and He said to Philip, "Follow Me," and Philip found Nathanael, and without any other proof of Christ's divinity than that contained in those words, "Follow Me," and in Christ's personality, said to him, "We have found Him, of Whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph." By the interpretation of a phrase, Philip sprang out of his dead lovelessness into the love and the life of Christ; and I am sure that no life has ever heard that sweet voice "that makes whoever hears a homesick soul thereafter until he follows it to heaven," saying "Follow Me," without seeing back of that voice the lovely face of the divine Messiah, the Lamb of God Who came to take away the sins of the whole world. "Follow Me."

But what does following Jesus Christ mean? I suppose that there is scarcely one of us who would not claim to be a follower of Jesus Christ. But what does it mean to follow Jesus Christ? Well, what does it mean to follow any man? If, when Mr. Hewitt defeated Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Henry George in the municipal campaign for the mayoralty of New York City, I had said that I was a follower of Henry George, you would have understood, of course, that I believed to an extent in Mr. George's views; that I was supporting him in his candidacy for the mayoralty; that I was lending my influence to his election; that I believed in his personal character, and was willing to trust to him the large responsibilities of the office for which he was a candidate. Is that what it means to follow Christ? Not much more than that, if Jesus Christ was only a man. But Jesus Christ was more than a man, and to follow Him means more than simply to believe in His views, or to have confidence in His character, or to be a supporter of Jesus for the position which He is claiming as spiritual King of all the children of His Father. It means more than that to follow Christ, for Christ demands of those who follow Him what no man ever dared to demand of his followers. He demands that every thought shall be brought into captivity to His obedience; He demands that all life shall be laid down at His feet, and that He Himself shall be given the

throne and sceptre in the human life that would call itself His. He claims in the life of every man a surrender of the man's whole will, of all a man's nature to Himself, and He offers, of course, in exchange to give that which is of infinitely greater value—even the indwelling of His own life. But that does not alter the fact that He demands in those who would call themselves His followers what no man ever dared to demand, what no man could ever expect to obtain from his fellowmen.

What does it mean to follow Jesus Christ? It means very clearly that my life must be like Christ's life, not by any mechanical external imitation. I think that many books that are written in our day with the most earnest and devout purpose make this great mistake of laying down for us rules of mechanical imitation of Jesus, which are themselves the denial and the distrust of the Spirit of Jesus, which is liberty. There is no need of effort in making one's life like Christ's. Christ Himself will make the life like His which is willing to assume toward Him the attitude of discipleship, and to say to Him, "Master, I follow Thee," for Christ Himself will put into operation in that life the principles that make His own life.

As one studies the Master's life, the principles that made His life seem to fall into these five classes. First of all, the principles that found expression in what Paul called Jesus's empty-

ing of Himself, what the Buddhists call, with reference to Sakya Muni, "the great renunciation." All that Gautama Buddha gave up was his human, kingly crown, while what Christ gave up was the crown and throne of a heavenly kingdom, when with an infinite stoop of condescension He came down thence to walk to and fro here among men. Surely, that was the first great principle of Jesus's life. A life that would be like Christ's must be imbued with that same principle. Jesus Himself taught this. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." He pointed out to His disciples that, first of all, this great principle must be put in operation by His Spirit in their lives, which had ruled His life, the principle to which Paul referred when, in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, he said: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; Who being in the form of God, counted not equality with God a prize to be jealously retained, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man and being found in the fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." We who would follow Jesus Christ must learn, first of all, to be like Him in this absolute renunciation of self-life and self-purpose. We must be willing "to give up the love of life for the sake of the life of love."

The second set of principles in Jesus's life are the principles of testing and of endurance of testing. When He began His ministry He went out at once into the great temptation where He was tried. For we have not a high priest that was not tempted, or incapable of being tempted, or that is unable to sympathise with us, but one who was in all points tempted like as we; and who in that "He Himself hath suffered being tempted, is able to succour them also that are tempted." Is it not true that the better the life the larger its temptations? I believe, even though it is not a true view, there is truth in the view that the best compliment that God can offer us is to suffer temptation to come to us; for there is evil to be overcome in this world, and that evil must be distributed among those who are able to overcome it, and God allows to us just that burden which is within the measure of our strength. If He allows one more or less than his brother, it is because his ability to endure is greater or less than his brother's. The holier a life is the larger its temptations will be; finer temptations, of course, not so gross as the old; temptations accompanied with a larger power of resistance than was possessed before, but temptations so bitter, so hot, so keen, that the low, coarse life could not conceive them if by any means they could be expressed to it. To all of us the following of Jesus, each step in the way, will mean a life

of larger temptation, and therefore a life of finer fibre and of larger glory, and a life laid under heavier responsibilities to resist. What if Jesus Christ had played traitor to humanity in the wilderness? What if He had fallen when Satan came to Him endeavouring to overthrow Him at the beginning? All history since Christ, all history before Christ, would have been written over with a great blur. The principle of temptation in Christ's life was accompanied with a principle of a perfect endurance; and it must be so with us who would follow Him.

Then, thirdly, after His temptation, the Master came out at once from the wilderness, and stood forth before men to make His public declaration. Imagine yourself, for a moment, in that crowd that stood around Him, the carpenter's son from the village of Nazareth, and hear Him speaking, "I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven." "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in Heaven." The most difficult confession you or I were ever called upon to make was as nothing in comparison with the self-declaration which Christ was called to make that day when untried, fresh from His obscure life, He stepped out into the blaze of the scrutiny of all Israel, and said to

those worshippers of tradition and of authority: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old times, but *I* say unto you, I, I, I." And so throughout His ministry, His preaching was a declaration of difficult truth. He closed His life with confessions as great as those with which He began. Have you ever thought why Paul, in charging Timothy, "I charge thee in the sight of God, Who quickeneth all things, and in the sight of Jesus Christ," added, "Who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession." It was because Paul understood that among all the great principles of Christ's life, scarcely any was greater than that principle which found its expression in His absolute fearlessness of assertion of His message and His person and of the relationship which had existed between Him, the Son, and the Father Who had sent Him. If we follow our Master, we must be in our confession of Him before men as clear, as unqualified, as strong, as He was, when, nineteen centuries ago, He stood upon the hills overlooking the tremulous blue waves of Galilee or faced Pontius Pilate.

The fourth set of principles that controlled Christ's life, and which He Himself will set to control our lives,—how can they be expressed better than by calling them the principles of loving human tenderness, the principles which governed, throughout, that career of gentle, little unremembered acts of kindness and of love, the

life of "the first true gentleman that ever breathed," that "very perfect, gentle knight":

> "And of His port as meeke as is a mayde,
> He nevere yet no vileynye he sayde."

Those of us who would follow Him must show those principles of loving tenderness which made His life so sweet, so generous, so thoughtless of all self-interest, so thoughtful of all innocence and of all sinners, and let them govern also in our lives and shape them after the fashion of His own.

Last of all, there is the fifth set of principles, which we must allow to control our lives, and which are summarised in the great names of Gethsemane, and Calvary, and Olivet. No one enters into the life of Christ's discipleship who does not seek, not the renunciation only, but the very death of all his old low self and self-life. For life is far more than just ease and gentleness, far more than confession and the endurance of the tests that God sends us. Life is a daily dying and rising—as the old lines run:

> "As once toward heaven my face was set,
> I came unto a place where two ways met.
> One led to Paradise and one away;
> And fearful of myself lest I should stray,
> I paused that I might know
> Which was the way wherein I ought to go.
> The first was one my weary eyes to please,
> Winding along thro' pleasant fields of ease,

Beneath the shadow of fair branching trees.
'This path of calm and solitude
Surely must lead to heaven,' I cried,
In joyous mood.
'Yon rugged one, so rough for weary feet,
The footpath of the world's too busy street,
Can never be the narrow way of life.'
But at that moment I thereon espied
A footprint bearing trace of having bled,
And knew it for the Christ's, so bowed my head,
And followed where He led."

In the life of each one of us truly following Jesus, these principles that make Christ's life and Christ Himself living in these principles, must be operating.

Is that all that following Jesus means? From one point of view, yes; and yet there is one element which has not had emphasis enough. Following Jesus means that I turn over to Jesus all my judgments, all my tastes, all my opinions, all my few talents for His use; that I sink in Him all my interests; that in the fine old phrase of Ignatius, He becomes to me "my inseparable life," and I have no longer any life "divided, O Lord of Life, from Thee." All my life becomes Christ's when I have once said to Him, as I have heard His voice say, "Follow me," "Master, I follow thee."

Following Christ means, of course, also, the complement of this. As I hand over to Christ all that I am and all that I have, Christ hands back to me all that He is and all that He has.

I say it very reverently. Our Master says to us "Ye are My Master;" just as truly as we say to Him, "Thou art My Master;" for He has put at my disposal all that is His, even as I have tried to put at His disposal all that is mine. Nothing that He possesses is held back from me. All those treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are hidden in Him are made mine. He Himself is made to me the unlimited horizon of a new heaven and a new earth. Jesus Christ gives far more than He asks from any of those whom He asks to follow Him. Years ago, one who was at that time perhaps the best known astronomer of our country, in an address which he made at Smith College when he was speaking there one Sunday afternoon, quoted a hymn which he said was his favourite hymn. I have thought of it often as coming from him, a man who had seen more things than any of us can hope to see. This was the hymn he said he loved best of all:

"Jesus, these eyes have never seen
That radiant form of thine.
The veil of sense hangs dark between
Thy blessed face and mine.
I hear Thee not, I see Thee not,
Yet art Thou oft with me;
And earth hath ne'er so dear a spot
As where I meet with Thee."

Only the old hymn errs in this: that Christ is not "oft" with those that follow Him. "If any

man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also shall My servant be." It is one of the laws of the Kingdom of God that Christ and His servant, His follower, can never be apart. Though I go down into the uttermost depths of the earth, even there will His love protect me. Though I wander off out of the sight of all men, His love is with me still.

> "I know not where His islands lift
> Their fronded palms in air,
> I only know I cannot drift
> Beyond His love and care."

Into the secret of His presence we go morning and night. In the secret place not "oft" but always is the soul that is following Jesus privileged to live and to walk, to wake and to sleep, in Him. These things it means to follow Christ.

But even more. "Come ye after me," was His word to those disciples on the shores of Galilee, and what? "Come ye after me, and I will make you to be fishers of men." In other words, "Follow me, and others will follow you." Following Jesus Christ is the door to the influence we covet. I suppose that all of us covet influence. There is nothing for which men hunger so as they hunger for influence over their fellow men. Until the new era dawned, 2,000,000 men came up to take the annual examinations in the civil service in China every year. Men took these examinations year after

year for seventy years. There were instances of old men over a hundred years of age still trying to pass the entrance examinations of what was practically the great university of China, so hot was their ambition after those positions of influence and leadership which could be obtained in no other way. Scarcely a year passes in India that some of the young Hindus who fail in the examination do not commit suicide, so disappointed are they at having lost the chance of rising into the positions of influence that they desire. Few of us probably want anything more than we want the ability to influence men and women to follow Jesus. We do not long for a crown of glory. We do long for the fulfilment in our lives of that old promise in Daniel, that they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever. We would like to feel as Paul felt, who was willing to be accursed from God for his brothers' sake if only he might turn them to the light and joy of Christ. We want to feel, as he felt, the thrilling eagerness and joy of influence.

"Oft when the Word is on me to deliver,
Lifts the illusion and the truth lies bare.
Desert or throng, the city or the river,
Melts in a lucid Paradise of air.
Only like souls I see the folk thereunder
Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings.
Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,
Sadly contented in a show of things.

Then with a rush the intolerable craving
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call,
Oh, to save these, to perish for their saving,
Die for their life, be offered for them all."

And here is the secret: "Follow me." "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men."

Nor is even that all. "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." I do not know the way I go; you do not know the way you go. Now and then we become conscious that the way is dark, and we are far from home, and we cry for the kindly Light to lead us on. "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life"; He Himself stands waiting by the side of those who are waiting with willingness to follow Him, ready to lead us on.

"And although the way be cheerless,
We can follow calm and fearless,
Till we safely stand in the Fatherland."

Nor is that all. "If any man serve me, let him follow Me; and he that followeth Me, him shall My Father honour." He is calling us to-day, as nineteen hundred years ago He called over the waves of Galilee, saying, "Christian, follow me." Shall we let Him pass by, with the gleam of His white robe dying out of our sight, and the sweet voice growing fainter and fainter in our ears, and the radiance that always goes

with Him sinking out of our sky; shall we let Him pass? Or, as He cried, "Follow me," shall we turn to Him, knowing well what it means, and rising up, leave all and follow Him?

This is the whole of it. He, Himself, stands waiting, with all of the Father's life and the Father's joy and the Father's fulness, and the Father's glory, ready to give them to us if we will follow Him, and there is nowhere else that they can be found.

"Long did I toil and knew no earthly rest.
Far did I roam and found no lasting home.
At last I sought them in His sheltering breast
Who opes His arms and bids the weary come.
With Him I found a home, a rest divine;
And I since then am His, and He is mine.

"The good I have is from his store supplied,
The ill is only what He deems the best.
He for my friend, I'm rich with naught beside,
And poor without Him, though of all possessed.
All things may change; I take or I resign,
Content while I am His and He is mine.

"Whate'er may change, no change in Him is seen;
A glorious sun that wanes not nor declines.
Above the clouds and doubts He walks serene,
And sweetly on His people's darkness shines.
Whate'er may come, I care not nor repine
While I my Saviour's am, and He is mine.

"While here, alas! I know but half His love,
But half discern Him and but half adore;

But when I meet Him in the courts above,
I hope to love Him better, praise Him more,
And sing and tell amid the choir divine
How fully I am His and He is mine."

Let us go with Him and be His, that He may go with us and be ours.

V

THE INNER CIRCLE

AMONG the multitude who followed Jesus, attracted by the novelty of His doctrine and the magic of His mighty works, there were a few who heard in His doctrine the voice of the Father and who perceived that the mighty works were signs. How many men and women of sincere and discerning faith were hidden in the multitude we can not say. We know that there were some hundreds of them. From among these Jesus selected seventy, and sent them out two by two before His face into every city and place whither He Himself would come. Besides these seventy He chose twelve, not to go out from Him, but to be with Him, to learn His ways and to acquire His spirit. And within this circle He had another circle of three—sometimes of four—who were closer to Him still. Who the men were who composed this inner circle we know. They were the first four disciples whom He had won—John and James and Simon Peter and Andrew his brother. Apart from the story in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, which tells us so ingenuously of how these four men became the disciples of Jesus, we see on three different occasions three of them

living in the closest relations with Him, and on one other occasion all four close by His side. Peter and James and John were the only three whom He would suffer to go with Him when He went into the room and restored the little daughter of the ruler of the synagogue. We read later that when He would be transfigured He took Peter and James and John and went up into an high mountain apart and was glorified before them. Later, as the end drew near, He sat on the Mount of Olives, over against the temple; and there were with Him Peter and James and John and Andrew. And last of all, when He went down into the Garden of Gethsemane, there were three whom He took along to watch with Him—Peter and James and John. As last in the old life so first in the new He drew these men close to Him. To two of them He appeared on Easter Day and then to all three and perhaps to Andrew also on the shore of the old sea where He had first called them to come after Him.

What these men who made up the inner circle daily saw and heard in their intimate relations with Christ we may somewhat guess from what we know that they saw and heard on these occasions when we see them with Him. They saw as no other men the tenderness of Jesus; they saw as no other men the glory of Jesus; they saw as no other men the calm dignity and prophetic discernment of Jesus, and they saw as none

others the exquisite suffering and sympathy of Jesus. It is impossible that our hearts should not long to have seen what they saw. We also pray:

"Oh to have watched Thee through the vineyards wander,
Pluck the ripe ears and into evening roam!—
Followed, and known that in the twilight yonder
Legions of angels shone about Thy home."

But could we have seen if we had been there? All the disciples were not in this inner circle. How did Jesus come to have an inner circle among His inmost friends? Was His choice of these three men a matter of partiality and of divine selection, or might any disciple who desired have belonged to this inner company if he had been willing to live as close to Jesus as these? Whatever limitations were imposed upon our Lord's selection of His friends by the conditions of His earthly life, however narrow the possibilities of membership in this inner circle may have been when Christ was here, we have His own word for it that now any man who will may belong to the inmost company of His friends. He Himself said to the woman by Jacob's well that the day was coming—yes, was now come—when those who worship the Father will worship Him in spirit and in truth, for the Father is seeking such to worship Him; and in ways that seemed almost to exhaust His own divine powers of appeal our Lord spoke to

those about Him, and left to His disciples of all days the most winning invitations to come and join the most secret company of His own. He speaks still as He spoke of old in His pathetic expostulation to the Jews: "Come unto me. Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think in them ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." We read that as He came around over the brow of the Mount of Olives for one of His last visits to Jerusalem, and emerged from the shadow of the rock which, as Dean Stanley says, hides the city completely from the sight of the traveller until it bursts all at once upon his view, He wept over it, and He said, "If thou hadst known, even thou, the things that belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes." From beside that rock on Olivet we may still hear the invitations of His love. And we read even in that stern chapter, the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, in which. He denounces so unhesitatingly and with so little compromise the hypocrisy and the blindness of the Pharisees, that He could not even then restrain the desire to invite men into the closest possible relationship with Him; and He broke out at the end of that chapter with the appealing cry, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathers her little ones under her wings, and ye would not!" For a surety the picture that John Bun-

yan draws of the man at the gate, of which Barbara MacAndrew makes use in her poem, is wholly justified by Jesus's own words.

"Thus day and night they are drawing nigh
With tears and sighs to the heavenly gate,
Where the Watchman stands in His majesty,
With a patience that never has said, 'Too late!'

"Let the sorrowful children of want and sin
Draw near to the gate whence none depart.
Let the nations arise and enter in,
For the Lord is willing with all His heart."

But we may say in our hearts, as we recall in this way the Saviour's eager invitation to us to be among His best friends, that our temperaments preclude the possibility of our ever becoming members of the inner circle. But the constitution of the first inner circle is proof of the capacity of every man to belong. A man may say: "I am incapable by my disposition of belonging to the inner circle at all. I am vacillating, unreliable, impulsive, hasty in my spiritual judgments. There are hours when I could belong, but there are other hours when I am far away, and I would be but a hypocrite if I pretended now that I could join and remain faithful to that sacred company. I have always been inconstant and unreliable and changeable and full of moods, and the inner circle is not for me." But Simon Peter was this sort of a man, and he

belonged. Another may say: "I am by nature cool and undemonstrative; my mind is not spiritual—it is mathematical. I am all the time calculating; I am frugal of my emotions. Much that is said in religious meetings makes no appeal to me. It does not touch me. If I were a man of delicate spiritual sensibilities, as others whom I know, I could join." But Andrew was just such a man, and he belonged. Or one may say: "I am hard in my judgments of others. I am prone to severity. I am not of that generous and charitable temperament which disposes men to free spiritual fellowship. I have my opinions, and everything has to bend to them. I cannot let myself go. I am of a different sort from the demonstrative men who belong in the inner circle." But James was such a man, and he belonged. And as for all the men of love, John was a member of this early inner circle, and represents the right of every man whose heart is tender toward Jesus—who, however weary he may be of his own weakness and stern toward himself, is all gentleness and love toward his Lord Jesus, to come and abide with Him. For such men John is the sufficient evidence that they belong in the inner circle of the Saviour.

But how may men enter this circle, if it is not a matter of election or of partiality, but is open to every Christian man? How did these first disciples enter? In the first place, they esteemed membership in the inner circle as a

desirable thing—they *wanted to belong;* and as Simon Peter said, far on in his life, they were willing to sacrifice everything else for the sake of belonging. "Lord," he said, "we have left all that we might be close to Thee." If there be some of us who are not desirous of belonging, we cannot get in. If there are other things that we esteem as more to be desired than membership in the inner circle of Christ's friends, we cannot enter. If we are esteeming some personal vice, if we are counting some personal ambition, if we are holding this or that taste as a more valuable thing than membership in the inner circle of Christ's friends, we cannot be admitted there. But we can go in, just as these first disciples went in, if we want to go—if we count membership in the circle of Christ's closest friends a worthy and noble thing, and if, counting it so, we are willing to walk in the footsteps of those first disciples who, when they heard His voice, rose up and left all and came in.

In the second place, *they followed Him.* It was doubtless hard work climbing the Mountain of Transfiguration; but it was enough for them that His figure went before. We know that it was hard work for them to go into the Garden of Gethsemane with Him. They were so wearied that they could not watch with Him, and fell asleep; but still they followed Him. And if one voice could speak to us again that is silent now, but is speaking in the courts of that

upper City, I think that voice would tell us again the story of the resolute and persistent following of Elisha upon the footsteps of his master. The true disciple will not be turned aside from following his Master. These men followed Jesus, and therefore they must be with Him. When He went to see His Father face to face on the Mount of Transfiguration they were with Him there. When He sat on the hill over against the temple and thought on the boundless years that were to roll before He came back again they were with Him there. And when He went down into the garden among the little olive trees that were kind to Him, to fight out there the last battle of all, they were with Him still, and saw glistening upon His brow the sweat-drops of blood. If men will follow Him He will not flee from them, and they will find themselves through the sheer force of their following in the circle of His inmost friends. These first three not only wanted to be with Jesus and to follow Jesus—they also *watched with Him.* Though their eyes were heavy with slumber, they still would try to watch with Him —and while they watched they beheld. So far as they would not let their Master slip from them, they perforce lived within the circle of His closest companionship. And wherever, still following in the steps of these first who made up the inmost circle of His dear ones, men are eager for Christ's deepest companionship, will

follow Him whatever must be left that they may follow, and will watch with keen and undimmed eyes His footsteps, they will find themselves, as Peter and James and John did nineteen hundred years ago, in the inner circle of the Lord.

"If I ask Him to receive me
Will He say me nay?
'Not till earth and not till Heaven
Pass away.

"Finding, following, keeping, struggling,
Is He sure to bless?
Angels, Martyrs, Prophets, Virgins
Answer, 'Yes.'"

But there are some things that will keep men out of the inner circle of Christ. One of them is *prayerlessness.* When we pray that we may be brought and kept within the spirit of the prayerful life we ask that He Who alone can do it should enable each one of us to comply with one condition of membership in the inmost circle of the Saviour's friends. The prayerless life is shut out of the closest companionship of Christ. I imagine that many of us would be ashamed to answer if anyone should ask and each one of us should be obliged candidly to reply whether we have the habit of personal daily secret prayer. I was reading recently some extracts from the diary and letters of old Andrew Bonar that may persuade our hearts to a greater desire to rise

beyond that prayerlessness of life which bars the gates of the inner circle against men:

"God has this week been impressing much upon me the way of redeeming time for prayer by learning to pray while walking from place to place."

"God will not let me get the blessing without asking. Until I get up to the measure of at least two hours in *pure prayer* every day I shall not be contented."

"My chief desire should be to be a man of prayer, for there is no want of speaking, and writing, and preaching, and teaching, and working; but there is need of the Holy Spirit to make all this effectual."

"Pray for my new charge, for we have no more than a few drops yet, and I believe I am to blame. I *work* more than I *pray*."

"Fully convinced that the best thing that I can do in my study and mode of conducting work will be to give more time to prayer, and always to give it the earliest place in my employments."

"In prayer in the wood for some time, having set apart three hours for devotion; felt drawn out much to pray for that peculiar fragrance which believers have about them who are very much in fellowship with God."

"I must at once return, through the Lord's strength, to not less than three hours a day spent in prayer and meditation upon the Word."

"I got away alone in the forenoon to the hills, and spent five hours in meditation and prayer."

At the age of sixty-six he writes, "The Lord is teaching me more prayerfulness"; and he recalls a new lesson "in regard to the helpfulness of trying to pray every hour of the day, though only for half a minute."

Do we pray with any such spirit of prayer as this? Our own hearts tell us that we lose much of the sweetness of the inner circle of Christ's friends which can be given only to those who have learned in the life of unceasing prayer to be receiving it from Him. Prayerlessness will shut men out of the inner circle.

Carelessness will shut men out. Many of us, perhaps, have thus far had no very high and strenuous spiritual purpose. It is possible for men to lose the joy of the inner circle of Christ's closest friends because they have no care to belong to that circle nor any care to meet the conditions of entrance thither. I think often of that verse in our Lord's utterance after the feeding of the five thousand, when He turned to the multitude who had struggled so hard to find Him, some rowing across the lake and some coming around until they met Him on the other side. "Work, my friends," He said, not intending to dissuade them from doing things or from drawing the tension of their life tight—"work, my friends; only work not for the meat that

perisheth, but for the meat that endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give to you." The emphasis of our Lord's declaration falls upon that one word "work." He intends men to labour, to agonise—that with all the rest and peace and placid surrender of the Christian life they should string themselves high also for that spiritual effort without which prayer is impossible and valueless, and without which there cannot be any high and holy fellowship with God at all. As Frederick Myers writes in "St. Paul":

"Let no man think that sudden, in a minute,
All is accomplished, and the work is done.
Though with thine earliest dawn thou shouldst begin it,
Scarce were it ended in thy setting sun.

"Oh, the regret, the struggle and the failing!
Oh, the days desolate and useless years,
Vows of the night, so fierce and unavailing,
Stings of my shame and passion of my tears!"

We pay for spiritual possessions with pain. Then and only then they come deep and abounding, the vast experience of God in Christ.

Another thing that will bar the gates of that inner fellowship is *uncleanness*. Our Lord will not entrust the pure chalice of His communicated life to uncleansed hands. Impurity of life will disqualify men for association with that white and stainless Christ Whose eyes are too

pure to look upon iniquity—who, though He was tempted in all points as we are, yet is without sin, and cannot admit to the secret places of His own pure heart one who tries to take in with him any tainted way. Into that inner secret of Christ's fellowship the man who would go must go leaving behind him at the gate his sin and defilement. "Forasmuch," says John Bunyan, "as the passage was wonderful narrow, even so narrow that I could not but with great difficulty enter in thereat, it showed me that none could enter into life but those that were in downright earnest and when also they left this wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin." Into that hidden place where Jesus Christ sits quiet forever with the circle of His dearest friends, only those men can go who are willing to go with clean hands and pure hearts. Into that great city which lies beyond, whose gates are pure jewels and whose streets are of pure gold, and out from under the throne in the midst of which there flows a river of water as pure as crystal, there is to be admitted nothing that worketh uncleanness or abomination or any defilement; and into the inner circle of Christ's friends here, no more than there, can that man come who cannot come with hands washed clean in the blood of Christ, a mind stripped of foul imagery and a heart desiring to be pure of all polluting things. As—

"Beyond our sight a city four-square lieth,
Above the clouds and fogs and mists of earth;
And none but souls that Jesus purifieth
Can taste its joys or hear its holy mirth,"

so there is opened before us here a secret fellowship with Christ made up of hearts ready in Him to be kept purified.

Is that which is found in the inner circle worth the cost? In that inner circle with Christ is the sight of the Father's face. None of the other Apostles saw the Father's glory as those saw it who that night went up with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration and saw His raiment made all white and glistening—whiter than any fuller on earth could whiten it; who saw the glory of God come down and rest upon Him, and who heard the Father's voice speak out of the clouds, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Our Lord waits still to give new deep revealings: "I have had some delightful times and passages since I came here, such as I never had before," wrote Horace Bushnell while away from home seeking health and finding God more deeply than ever before. "I never so saw God, never had Him come so broadly, clearly out. He has not spoken to me, but He has done what is more. There has been nothing debatable to speak of, but an infinite easiness and universal presentation to thought, as it were by revelation. Nothing ever seemed so wholly in-

viting and so profoundly supreme to the mind. Had there been a strain for it, then it could not be. Oh, my God! what a fact to possess and know that He is! I have not seemed to compare Him with anything, and set Him in a higher value; but He has been the *all,* and the altogether, everywhere, lovely. There is nothing else to compete; there is nothing else, in fact. It has been as if all the revelations, through good men, nature, Christ, had been now through, and their cargo unloaded, the capital meaning produced, and the God set forth in His proper day, —the good, the true, the perfect, the all-holy and benignant. The question has not been whether I could somehow get nearer,—nearer my God, to Thee; but as if He had come out Himself just near enough, and left me nothing but to stand still and see the salvation; no excitement, no stress, but an amazing beatific tranquillity. I never thought I could possess God so completely. What is to come of it? Something good and glorious, I hope."

If any of you are hungry for a more living touch with God, I speak to you of a place where hunger can be satisfied. Someone is said to have asked Lord Tennyson what was the greatest desire of his heart, and to have got the answer in reply that the greatest desire he had ever had was to have a "clearer vision of God." Who does not grow weary at times of what is said about Him, of his own beliefs regarding Him,

and hunger with an unappeasable hunger for Him, and say over to himself the prayer of George Macdonald:

"Oh, let me live in Thy realities,
Nor substitute my notions for Thy facts,
Notion with notion making league and pacts.
They are to truth as dream deeds are to acts,
And questioned make me doubt of everything.
O Lord, my God! my soul gets up and cries,
'Come, Thine own Self, and with Thee my faith bring'"?

If any of us are hungry for something more real than that which we have in our Christian lives—sick of the sham and the insincerity of them; the forms crumbling away beneath our touch, while we have not reached to the great verities that lie beyond them—here in the inner circle of Christ's inmost friends we may come upon, if we will, a new and living experience of Him. We shall enter into the secret of our God which is with those who fear Him and who go to dwell under the Almighty's shade.

There are some who will recall the quaint sonnet of John T. Napier, who worked in the office of the *Sunday School Times* in Philadelphia, and whose genius was cut untimely short:

"O weary soul, that yet with willing feet
Wouldst trudge o'er many a hard and rugged way
In uncomplaining toil, and never stay
Until within His courts thine eyes shall meet

The splendour of His look, to thee be sweet
That word He spake: 'Unto me pray,
Not as the hypocrites, in blaze of day,
In public paths or in the open street,

"'But in thy closet kneeling; there within
Unto me make thy prayer, to me thy moan,
And I will hear in heaven where I abide,
And I will give thee cleansing for thy sin—
Yea, we together shall abide alone.
Shut thou thy door; heaven's gate shall open wide.'"

We shall find these things if we want them—the experience of God and the secret of the Most High—in this near companionship of our Master Jesus Christ. He is here as truly as nineteen hundred years ago He stood before those Jews pleading, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." He stands here calling us, calling us, calling us into the number of His most intimate friends—into the limits of the inner circle of those He loves. Do we not wish to go in—further in than ever in all the years that have gone by? And when we think on what is there, and what is to be missed if we do not go in, are we not willing to pay the price? Are we not willing? If we are, shall we not go in together to the inner circle of our Master's dearest, closest friends, and sit down there by His side, to come no more out forever?

VI

LOOKING AWAY TO JESUS

THE first summer conference I ever attended was the General Conference for Christian Workers at Northfield more than twenty years ago. At the end of my sophomore year in college I was persuaded to come up by a friend who is now a missionary in India. We lived in what was then called Hillside Cottage, and the first night through a heavy rain we made our way across the ploughed fields, where the Auditorium now stands, to the evening meeting in Stone Hall. Mr. Moody spoke that night on Elisha's miracle in filling the waterpots with oil and thus giving that widow woman money enough with which to discharge her debt and save her children from her creditors. I saw new things that night. I saw the neighbours peeking through the windows at the carrying of all those waterjars to the widow's house, the joy that filled the widow's heart when her two little children were saved from the clutches of her creditor, and I understood for the first time what our imaginations were given to us for, and how living a book this Bible is.

Professor Drummond was present that summer and Dr. A. J. Gordon, and a great many

others whose living words left an indelible impression on all the men and women who came under their influence; but of all those we heard that summer I think there was scarcely anyone who left a deeper and stronger impression on the lives of the men and women who had gathered that month of August than old Dr. William Henry Green. He was the foremost Hebrew scholar in America and one of the simplest and most gentle Christian men. The blessing that came to me through him came indirectly, through my friend who had persuaded me to come. He was one of the most devout, earnest Christian men I have ever known, and he was making it his practice then to spend the first hour of every day over a page in the Psalms. He said he got that suggestion from Dr. Green, who had once mentioned in one of his classes at Princeton that for years he had been in the habit the first thing every day of reading a page from the Psalms, to nourish his life on the beauty and glory that is there. I learned a great many lessons afterwards from Dr. Green, as did every one who ever came under his influence. Any who were in classes of his will remember the almost womanly tenderness of his love of Jesus Christ, and the way in which he often broke down in the midst of his prayers, having to pause for a while until he recovered his self-possession again and was able to go on to the end. I remember what I think must have been one of his

favourite hymns, for he gave it out so often when he led chapel services. It began:

> "Enthroned on high, Almighty Lord,
> The Holy Ghost send down."

and some stanzas down this couplet came:

> "And bring us where no clouds conceal
> The beauty of Thy face."

And nobody could feel that influence without being able to trace back to those early morning hours over the Psalms much of the power, beauty and simplicity of the man's Christian faith and character. Very many times since I have come back to that suggestion of spending the first moments of the day over a page of the Psalms. They have this great advantage over other portions of the Bible: they are so easily detachable. We feel regarding many other parts of the Bible that we scarcely have any right to take to ourselves some isolated verse. In the Psalms we feel that every verse may be separated, that each throbs with some old moral experience of long years ago, breathing out in those old days struggles, conflicts, aspirations and desires that are akin to those that fill our own hearts.

I have been very much struck lately in reading biographies with the way in which the lives of great and strong men have received practical

nourishment from the study of the Psalms. In Thring's "Life and Letters," a book which every college man ought to read, you may recall the way in which he speaks in his private journal of the feeling he has that he was living over again all the experiences of the men who wrote the Psalms, and that what they wrote down there in that ancient time was only forecasting the battles of his own life. Some of you doubtless recall the passage in Morley's first volume of the life of Gladstone, in which he quotes an extract from one of Mr. Gladstone's diaries regarding the place which the Psalms had filled in his life: "On most occasions of very sharp pressure or trial, some word of Scripture has come home to me as if borne on angels' wings. I should put some down now, for the continuance of memory is not to be trusted. (1) In the winter of 1837, Psalm cxxviii. This came in the most singular manner, but it would be a long story to tell. (2) In the Oxford contest of 1847 (which was very harrowing) the verse, 'O Lord God, Thou strength of my health, Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.' (3) In the Gorham contest, after the judgment: 'And though all this be come upon us, yet do we not forget Thee; nor behave ourselves frowardly in Thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back; neither our steps gone out of Thy way. No, not when Thou hast smitten us into the place of dragons: and covered us with the shadow of death.' (4)

On Monday, April 17, 1853 (his first budget speech), it was: 'O turn Thee then unto me, and have mercy upon me: give Thy strength unto Thy servant, and help the son of Thine handmaid.' Last Sunday (Crimean War Budget) it was from the Psalms for the day: 'Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me; Thou hast anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.'" It was a surprise to me to think that when Mr. Gladstone rose to speak in Parliament before presenting his great budgets, as he paused for just a moment before beginning, the thing that was sometimes in his mind was some verse from the Psalms, by which he was nerving himself toward the vision of great righteousness, and the fearless expression of what he saw as the truth. I think we lose a great deal, because we have not taken into our lives the living message of the Psalms to men who are fighting the battle and around whom the dread adversaries are encamped.

I suppose one reason why we do not do this is that the Psalms have become so commonplace to us, their language is so familiar that there is no longer any bite or tingle to it. For this reason it is a good thing for a man to read the Psalms in some other language—in French, Spanish, German, or Latin, or to take some other translation of the Bible than that to which he is accustomed. I have gained a great deal of help myself from reading the Psalms over in the

American Standard Revised translation, which gives new significance to a great many old and worn phrases. Take, for example, the marginal reading of the first verse in the forty-fifth Psalm. It reads, you remember: "My heart overfloweth in a goodly matter; I speak of the things which I have made touching the king." Now, the revised margin is: "My heart overfloweth with a goodly matter; I speak: my work is for a king." Shame? I am speaking for a king.

Or take the tenth verse of the fifty-ninth Psalm. That reads: "The God of my mercy shall prevent me." The new version reads: "My God with His loving kindnesses will meet me." Or take the third verse in the seventeenth Psalm, if we want something by which to test our lives, "Thou hast proved my heart: Thou hast visited me in the night; Thou hast tried me, and findest nothing." Let the man who wants something by which to check his inner moral life when he lies down to sleep recall that old word: "Thou hast visited me in the night; Thou hast tried me, and findest nothing of which I need to be ashamed." Take for one other illustration the verse, "They looked unto Him, and were lightened." The new version reads, "They looked unto Him and were radiant." I do not know what word can come to us more appropriately than this word: the influence of looking away unto Jesus Christ upon our lives and char-

acters, the power of the vision of Christ to make our lives, however scarred and clouded and shadowed they may have been, bright and radiant with the purity and the beauty of His own life. If you will read two passages, one from the Old and the other from the New Testament (Ex. xxxiv. 29-35; Matt. xvii. 1-9), you will have the two outstanding Bible illustrations of this power of the divine vision to transform the faces of men. As Moses came down out of that secret fellowship with God, he knew not, but others knew, that there was a divine light shining on his face; and as Jesus went up into the mountain and knelt there in that prayer that lifted His life from the lower levels into the very highest and most unclouded fellowship with God, His face also shone as the sun. His very garments became all white and glistening, whiter than any fuller on earth can whiten them. And, while doubtless these were two great exceptional experiences, the principle that is in them is a living principle still, that the same vision that Moses saw as he talked with Jehovah, the same vision that Jesus saw on the mountain of transfiguration, the vision that made their faces shine as the sun, will have power to make our lives all luminous and radiant, too.

As a matter of fact, the vision is doing this still. You know that during the Boxer troubles in China it was said that the Chinese Christians could not have escaped even if they had tried,

because their faces betrayed them. There was a light in their eyes which their heathen neighbours recognised as characteristic of the followers of Jesus Christ. They had looked unto Him, and their lives were lightened by that look. A little while ago Mrs. Edward Hume, from Bombay, showed me photographs of her work in India. Among the pictures which she laid down were two that were conspicuous because of the great contrast between them. The first of them was a photograph of thirty women, all of them dressed in dark garments, and in the middle of the forehead of each one was a little ash dot, showing that each one was attached still to the old idolatrous life. There was no need of that mark to tell you that about them. The low brows, the unintelligent eyes, the very aspect of dejection and hopelessness that lay across those lives told the story without any sign upon their foreheads. They had never looked unto Him Who is able to throw radiance into the life. The other photograph was a photograph of the same number of women, all of them dressed in white. There were no ash spots on their foreheads. Nor was the absence of them necessary to tell you that the light had touched those lives. They were thirty girls that Mrs. Hume had long had under her care. The influence of her life had played on the lives of those girls. They had passed with her through all the torture of famine days in India. They had nursed the orphans

when it was almost nauseating to do it. The refining influence of unselfishness and sympathy with suffering was stamped upon each life. A light shone in it. They had looked unto Christ and their faces were radiant.

And what has taken place in these lives all of us have seen taking place in other lives. Any one is to be pitied who has not a friend, many friends, who have looked away unto Jesus Christ and been made radiant, on whose faces there is the visible light that comes from their having caught the far-off vision of the beauty and perfectness of the Saviour. There is a chapter in Dr. Trumbull's "Old Time Student Volunteers" entitled "What a Boy Saw in the Face of Adoniram Judson." Years ago, long before he ever thought of writing that story, in his boyhood days in Stonington, Conn., when the journey from New England to New York was by train as far as Stonington, and then by Sound boats to New York, Dr. Trumbull said the boys used to play around the wharf in the evening in the hope of seeing some great character of the nation as he passed to or fro between New England and the South. There was an accommodation train that came in early in the evening, about an hour before the express. Immediately after the arrival of the express the boat put off for New York. Often some one would come in on the early train and have an hour to wait before the boat left. One evening the accommodation

train came in, and he saw a man get off the train whose appearance immediately attracted the boy. He walked up to him, looking at him curiously. Dr. Trumbull said he had never seen any such light on a human face before, and at last it dawned upon him that the man was Adoniram Judson, of whom he had seen a picture. He hurried up the street to find the local Baptist minister to bring him to see whether this was the great missionary. Sure enough, it was Adoniram Judson; but the Baptist minister forgot all about the little lad as soon as he saw the great Judson, and fell into conversation with the missionary. The boy circled about meanwhile, looking at that face. Fifty years and more had passed away when Dr. Trumbull told me the story. He had not forgotten, he would never forget until the day he died, the beautiful light that shone upon Adoniram Judson's face. He had been with Jesus Christ, and the light was there that shone like the sun, so that whoever stood beside him saw that Someone had been near him Who gave a radiance to life.

How many times each of us has practically annulled his gospel, and frustrated the words in which he has proclaimed the gospel simply because his face has borne no corroboratory evidence of that which he has been speaking with his lips.

I remember reading some time ago a chapter in Dr. Murdock's "Indian Missionary Manual"

dealing with methods of presenting the gospel, where he emphasises the necessity of presenting it in the spirit of gentleness and love, and tells of a discussion between a missionary and a Hindoo disputant. The Hindoo became furious and struck at the missionary's head with a big stick. The spirit of the gospel which Lacroix, who was the missionary concerned, manifested by word and look was such that the Hindoo audience burst out with the shout, "Victory, victory to Jesus Christ." What had won them? Lacroix had been with Jesus Christ and Jesus had touched his life so that the light that was in Christ was shining through his face and bearing testimony to the truthfulness of what he spoke, and he acted as a Christian. A friend was speaking recently of some of the sources of power of a faithful and beloved missionary worker. He was a humble and gentle man who had derived his influence from his association with Jesus Christ. My friend spoke of the way the Saviour had gained control of this life in its expressions. He told me how he had had to send once for a plumber's boy to repair an old-fashioned chandelier made of glass pendants. It was an old family heirloom, and the man to whom it belonged valued it very highly because of the associations connected with it. In repairing it the boy did not notice that in turning it one way below he was unscrewing it from the ceiling above, and after a little the whole massive thing came down

in ruins on the floor. The lad stood dazed at the havoc he had caused, and waited tremblingly for the owner to enter, making ready for the outburst he felt sure would come. When the owner came in he surveyed the wreck in silence, and then turned to the frightened boy with the quiet, kindly words, "Well, my lad, I trust you didn't hurt yourself?" The lad was not a Christian at the time, but that was the beginning of his becoming one. The look on that man's face, the evident transformation of his life by the power of Christ were irrefutable commendations of the Saviour. He had looked away unto Jesus Christ and been made radiant by it.

And unless we learn the secret of looking unto Jesus Christ and having our lives transformed by our vision of Him, what influence will we have as we go out except the influence of nullification upon the gospel and reproach upon Jesus Christ? If we want our lives changed, here is the secret that each of us may gain for himself to-day. Looking away unto Jesus Christ and keeping our eyes fixed there is the secret of the radiant light.

First of all, it is looking unto Christ that gives us the right conception of what character is. I look away from Christ and I have one idea of what constitutes perfect character. We are forming, all of us, diverse judgments of ideals and standards of life proportioned exactly to the clearness of our vision of Jesus Christ. What

ideals do we see? I was sitting in my library the other day dictating some letters, and I happened to look up suddenly at Watts' picture of Sir Galahad. There was a little yellow light falling just on the face and nowhere else, and I said, Is it possible that Watts put that light there and I never saw it before? I examined the picture and found a stray ray of sunlight coming in and falling upon Sir Galahad's face. I saw anew what gave that picture its grace and power. What Watts had painted was not Sir Galahad, but what Sir Galahad was seeing. What was there in the fresh, wistful, youthful face? What was there was just the reflection of the far-off vision of the grail Sir Galahad was following. The purity, strength, and holiness of what he saw were painted there in his life. The qualities of character which he was beholding were writing themselves on his face. And what, as I have already said, is the significance of those words in the prologue of the Gospel of John, "and the Word was toward God," but that the face of the Word was ever directed toward the face of the Father, so that what we see in looking toward the face of Jesus Christ is not so much anything original as a reflection upon the life of Christ of what He sees passing in the face and heart of God? He is what He is in His character because He is looking away unto what God is in His character. We will have in our lives as we go out precisely those ideals of character which

we see as qualities in Christ. Is our vision of Him dim, obscure, oblique? We shall go away with defective standards of judgment as to our moral life. Is our vision of Christ clear and unclouded and direct? If we have been brought to where no mist conceals the beauty of His face, we shall go with our standards of character patterned after His own.

Looking away unto Christ not only gives a man the right conception of what character is, but it shames him out of evil character; solidifies him in the deliberate choice of the character which is right. Every one of us knows the possibility of doing things under some circumstances which we cannot do under other circumstances. If we are living with our faces turned toward our Lord Jesus Christ there are certain practices that become absolutely impossible in our lives. You cannot have certain thoughts if you are aware that Jesus Christ is in the room, which you might think, barring Him from your presence. You cannot do certain things with your hands realising that Christ is near and that at any moment He may lay His pierced hands upon your hands, that you can do thinking that the Saviour is not near.

I was reading again not long ago the life of Keith Falconer, and some of his boyhood letters. In one he is speaking of the hymns of which he was most fond. There were many that were dear to him, but none so dear as the hymn we call by

the name of Rutherford, "The Sands of Time Are Sinking," especially the second stanza:

> "O Christ, He is the fountain,
> The deep, sweet well of love!
> The streams on earth I've tasted.
> More deep I'll drink above.
> There to an ocean fullness
> His mercy doth expand,
> And glory, glory dwelleth
> In Immanuel's land."

And then in another he goes on to tell how with this fresh, loving Christ, glowing all warm and tender in his life, new tests have come to him, and certain things which were practicable to him before he now finds to be utterly impossible in his life: "I must say something about Jesus Christ, because I think He ought never to be left out; and that is the fault I find with parties and balls and theatres: Jesus Christ Who is the All in All is utterly left out." Suppose we ran that rule across our lives. How much evil, shame, sin, and impurity would vanish from them! You remember the powerful story that is prefixed to the eighth chapter of the Gospel of John. What is the lesson of that story? How differently the presence of Jesus Christ made things look! Those men thought they were doing a very fine thing when they got that poor woman and resolved to bring her into Christ's presence. Every man felt proud in the thought

of his own sinlessness as he dragged the tarnished woman into the presence of the Saviour. How differently it looked after they got there, when Jesus wrote with His finger on the ground while the men looked and thought. How utterly different everything began to look to these men! After a little while the oldest man slunk off, and the next, and the next, and the next, until Jesus was left with the woman alone. They did not feel as they stood in Christ's presence as they had felt out in the street.* You and I know we do not feel the same toward sin away from Him. If only we could school ourselves into looking unto Him every hour, every day, it would make impossible many things that have stained and defiled our lives.

And looking away to Him would nerve us to resist all evil and to do the things that are right and good. You recall how the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews makes use of this conception. He is thinking of the Christian life as a race to be run. On every side of the course, banked up tier above tier, reach the tens of thousands of those who have run their race and won, and are now watching the living contestants. At the end of the course, behind the goal, he imagines the Saviour is standing holding the chaplets of olive leaves in His hand waiting to greet the runners as they come in. "Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every

weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith." We should rise up above our craven fear of those adversaries under whom we have again and again gone down, if only we kept our eyes fixed on the Saviour there waiting for us behind the goal. Looking away to Jesus would shame many of us out of evil character. It would form and perfect in us a more stainless life.

Looking away to Jesus Christ is the only way in which to nourish and unfold in each of us the perfect character. One of the addresses which Professor Drummond gave here twenty-one years ago was the address he published afterwards under the title of "The Changed Life," from the words, "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit." And he told in that address the story which has grown familiar to us, of the little Scotch girl who had such a simple, exquisite character that all those who knew her marvelled at the secret of it, but to none would she betray it, until at last she told one that when she was gone it would be found in the locket she had worn about her neck. Upon looking they found simply a scrap of white paper, on which were these words, "Whom having not seen I love." That affection for the

unseen Saviour Whom having not seen she loved was the influence that had been moulding and transfiguring her life. And there is not one of us, however evil and coarse our character, however sin may have tainted us, who cannot be changed. It may be gradual and long delayed, though I believe it is possible for Jesus Christ to change a man in a night. He could take any of us this hour and make new men of us if we would only deliver ourselves up unto His transforming power. Some of you will have read the story which Dr. James H. Taylor wrote some years ago of the curious old New England character of the third decade of the last century named Jake Parsons. The change in his life was far-famed, so significant and revolutionary had it been. He lay down to sleep one night an absolutely drunken, worthless wretch, having wellnigh lost his power of speech through his dissipation, loved only by the fragment of the family that was left to him. He woke up the next morning an absolutely changed man. For nearly forty years after that he lived a life without blemish or blot. Eight years after the change some one asked him what had produced it. This is the explanation he gave: "That night Jesus Christ appeared in my sleep. His face, as I saw it, seemed so pure, so lovely, and so friendly to me that when I awoke I forgot my old vices, and so loved my Saviour that I could not displease Him. Why, the sight of the face

of Jesus was so pure, so lovely, and so beautiful! He did not speak to me, He only looked at me; but His look told me that there was hope for me, that I could be forgiven, I could be purified. I looked at Him and cried like a child; I felt that I was a vile, miserable, wicked wretch, filthier than a dunghill. I cannot tell how I felt. When I looked at Him I was too happy to be afraid; but when I looked at myself I was too afraid to be happy. I forgot all about rum and tobacco, I was thinking so much about Christ, so pure, so lovely, so beautiful, so friendly. He was all heaven, all grace and beauty." One who knew him well, so Dr. Taylor says, wrote: "For thirty-five years he lived a blameless life, beloved by everybody. On a fine summer morning, my friend writes, the glorious old-new creature would crawl out of doors, and seating himself on the grassy bank in front of his humble home, turning his sightless face to the sun to feel its warmth, would say: 'The door is open into Heaven, just a little crack, and I shall soon see Jesus again. I shall know Him. He will look just so.' So he lived until he fell asleep in Jesus."

Each of us knows his own life, and just how unlike the life of Christ it is. Conceited, self-satisfied, pure but vain and self-confident, or scarred with evil imagination, we may be bearing about in our body the marks that will never leave us, that tell the story of vices, haunted by

the sins we would forget, that cling all the closer to us the more we struggle to lay them down. Or if it is not this, each of us knows the weakness of his own heart. But there is One Who, if we will look away to Him now, will take us just as we are, and will deliver us, scarred and full of shortcomings, and make us radiant with His own light and glory and purity. Shall we not let the transforming Christ make a trial with us?

I went one Sunday afternoon in New York City not long ago to a religious meeting, where a man was talking to men about Hoffman's pictures of our Lord. He had an excellent collection of them in stereopticon slides which he was showing to this crowd of men. He reserved until the last Hoffman's picture of Jesus as a lad talking with the doctors in the temple. As he threw the picture on the screen, a beautifully colored picture, he told the story of how he came to be in possession of his copy of it. He had gone to visit Hoffman, he said, immediately after the completion of that painting, and Hoffman gave him the first copy. He brought that copy home and put it in his business office in New York City. One day, as he was sitting there, a judge from the Supreme Court of one of the New England States came in to consult him about some business. He saw the picture standing on the easel. Instantly his eyes were attracted to it. He looked at it all the time he

was discussing his business, and after the business was over he sat a little while still looking at the picture, and then went away. Later in the morning he came back and said, "I want to see that Boy again." He was invited to sit down, and he sat down and gazed at that face, at those great open eyes, at that look of purity, which speaks of such hope and strength for men. He sat for nearly an hour looking at it, and then got up, his eyes very moist, and walked away. In the afternoon he came back and said, "I would like to see that picture of the Boy once more." The owner gave it to him, and said, "Go into my private office, sit down and look at it as long as you want to." He took the picture and went into the office and laid it down in his lap and cried over it. An hour passed, and then he came out and laid the picture down, and with tears running down his cheeks he said, "The Boy has conquered me." And he went out from the room with the picture of that Boy lingering in his life and transforming it. He is living now, said the speaker, in his own State, an influential Christian man, teaching scores of young men in his Bible class of Him unto Whom he had looked away and by Whom he had been changed.

I want to be changed myself very much in many ways that I do not propose to tell anybody else. But He knows, and I know He can do it. It may take Him a long time—ten, twenty,

fifty years—but I know that the changes I want made He can make, and that even if He never gets them made down here there will come a day when I shall wake and be satisfied with His likeness, seeing Him as He is. And that hope is worth all the world.

Would that we might let Him begin to effect His larger and richer results in our lives, that every one of us might fix his eyes upon Jesus Christ. Looking unto Him. He will make us radiant. We shall walk in the light as He is in the light.

VII

THE UNITY OF HEARTS IN CHRIST

WHATEVER other ideals of the Christian Church men may have formed, it is certain that the conception entertained by our Lord was that the Christian Church should be a body of men and women who had learned to love God and His Spirit and His Son with all their hearts and minds and souls and strength, and one another better than they loved themselves. Our Lord gave Himself, through His short life, to the working out of this ideal. He gathered around Him a little company of men whom He loved with a great love, whom He sought to teach what love was by revealing to them a new kind of love in Himself. He hoped to persuade these men to love one another with the same love wherewith He Himself loved them. By example He strove to reveal to them what this new love that filled His own heart was, and to lead them to have it for one another.

In some measure the early Church learned this lesson. As the heathen world looked on, it was the affection that bound the Christians together that most deeply impressed it. "Behold," they said, "how these Christians love one another." A great many came into the Church undoubtedly

drawn there by the warmth of friendship and love which visibly united the early Christians. If one had and another lacked, the one who had shared his possessions with the one who lacked. The early Church went out in power to begin its early conquests for Christ because it went out with a heart full of warm and unselfish love, because it could say to a world filled with people who knew no such fellowship: "Come, join our brotherhood; we will love you; we will take you into friendship; you too may belong to this unique society of men and women who are all truly lovers one of another."

"Now, for the first time," says Harnack in "The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries," "that testimony rose among men, which cannot ever be surpassed, the testimony that GOD IS LOVE. The first great statement of the new religion, into which the fourth evangelist condensed its central principle, was based entirely and exclusively on love: 'We love, because He first loved us,' 'God so loved the world,' 'A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another.' And the greatest, strongest, deepest thing Paul ever wrote is the hymn commencing with the words, 'Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.' The new language on the lips of Christians was the language of love.

"But it was more than a language, it was a

thing of power and action. The Christians really considered themselves brothers and sisters, and their actions corresponded to this belief. On this point we possess two unexceptionable testimonies from pagan writers. Says Lucian of the Christians: 'Their original law-giver had taught them that they were all brethren, one of another . . . . They become incredibly alert when anything of this kind occurs, that affects their common interests. On such occasions no expense is grudged.' And Tertullian (Apolog. xxxix) observes: 'It is our care for the helpless, our practice of loving kindness, that brands us in the eyes of many of our opponents. "Only look," they say, "look how they love one another!" (They themselves being given to mutual hatred.) "Look how they are prepared to die for one another!" (They themselves being readier to kill each other.)' Thus had this saying been really fulfilled: 'Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.'

"The gospel thus became a social message. The preaching which laid hold of the outer man, detaching him from the world, and uniting him to his God, was also a preaching of solidarity and brotherliness. The gospel, it has been truly said, is at bottom both individualistic and socialistic. Its tendency toward mutual association, so far from being an accidental phenomenon in its history, is inherent in its character. It spiritualises the irresistible impulse which draws one man to

another, and it raises the social connection of human beings from the sphere of a convention to that of a moral obligation. In this way it serves to heighten the worth of man, and essays to recast contemporary society, to transform the socialism which involves a conflict of interests into the socialism which rests upon the consciousness of a spiritual unity and common goal. This was ever present to the mind of the great apostle to the Gentiles. In his little churches, where each person bore his neighbour's burden, Paul's spirit already saw the dawning of a new humanity, and in the Epistle to the Ephesians he has voiced this feeling with a thrill of exultation. Far in the background of these churches, like some unsubstantial semblance, lay the division between Jew and Gentile, Greek and Barbarian, great and small, rich and poor. For a new humanity had now appeared, and the apostle viewed it as Christ's body, in which every member served the rest and each was indispensable in his own place."

We must put it in this way if we would do justice to the whole great truth as it lay in the mind of Christ and as it was afterwards developed by St. Paul. It is true that the Christian society is a band of men and women who love one another with this great unselfish love. But our Lord and Paul carried the thought of Christian society far beyond this. They thought of the Christian society, as our Lord puts it, as a

vine of which the life-blood was Christ, of which He Himself was the trunk, the disciples being the branches, springing out from Him, all of them bound together because they were common branches of one vine, while there flowed through them all, whether upper branches or lower branches, large branches or small branches, the one common tide of the single life. In Paul's mind the Christian Church was a society of men and women who loved one another with a love so real, so full, so life absorbing, that he could not think of any figure of speech more truly expressive of it than to say that the Church was a body, one organic unity, with hands, eyes, feet, and ears, but one body, one common life binding all altogether, so that the hands could not say to the eyes, "We have no need of you"; nor the honourable parts to the unhonourable parts, "We are not one with you," for all were members of one body; and the hearing, smelling, tasting, walking, handling members, all different in their functions and duties, were yet bound together by one common life, separable only at the pain of each and at the mutilation and ultimately the death of the body which they all made. If one member suffers all the members suffer with it; if one member is honoured all the members are honoured with it; if one member lacks, all the members want with it; if one member possesses, all the members own with it.

What a marvellous transformation would pass

over our Christian life if our conception of our relationship to one another fulfilled this great ideal of Paul. Now, what is malice but rejoicing in the hardship and loss of others? But in the body when one member suffers all the members suffer with it and there can be no malice. What is envy but repining when others are honoured? But if the body is all one no member can be honoured and the other members not to be honoured with it. What is selfishness but desiring that which others have not, or being vexed because others have that which we have not? But if all the members are one body, one can have nothing that all the others do not possess, nor any lack anything for the want of which all the others do not suffer, too.

You remember the old and quaint story of Charles Kingsley. Two monks had lived together in a cave remote from men until at last, wearied of the monotony of their quiet life, one of them made the suggestion that they vary it by quarrelling after the fashion of the world. But the monk to whom the suggestion was made said: "Brother, we have nothing to quarrel about. How can we change our life? What have we to quarrel over?" "We will take this stone," replied the other, "and we will lay it down between us. And I will say, This stone is mine. And you will say, No, the stone is mine. And so we will quarrel after the way of the world." So they took the stone and laid

it down between them, and the first monk said, "This stone is mine." The second monk said hesitatingly, "I think, brother, the stone is mine." "Oh, very well," said the monk who had suggested the quarrel, "if the stone is thine, take it." It was impossible that between those two lives, bound in a real unity for years, there should be any divergence. What one had the other possessed.

It would be well if we realised this truth, that there is no such thing as an isolated life. Every attainment of every one affects every other, every failure of every one affects every other. There is no such thing as isolated sin or purity. Your purity helps to make me pure, my sin helps to defile you. In all this world we cannot move faster than all move. There is no such thing as a single life getting perfection alone. We must remember that great saying of Paul in the second letter to the Corinthians, "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image." Nobody can do it alone. Paul understood this perfectly. You will find him striking this note again and again in his Epistles, that no solitary life can ever come to the fulness of God's ideal for it alone. We shall only reflect Christ perfectly as we all reflect Him; we shall only behold Him clearly as we all behold Him. We are all of us hampering or helping one another. Our lives are bound together not as our

ten fingers may be interlaced, but as my hand is a part of my body. Just as truly as my hand is a part of my body are your life and my life parts of one another, one common tide flowing through them both. And all evil, disease, sickness, and wrong in any one of us is just so much crime against every other one of us. Every victory, triumph, purity of life and soul is just so much victory won for every other human life.

It is true that the Christian Church is a gathering of men and women who love one another with a great and unselfish love. It is true that it is a gathering of men and women who are parts of one another, just as truly as our eyes and our ears and our hands are members of this one body of ours. I suppose that for many of us putting it this way is a difficult thing. We can understand how a physical body can be united, but we do not understand how a great mass of human beings can constitute an organic unity as a body does. This is because we do not know what life is. It is true that we are one with God in a far more real and true sense than that our bodies constitute one organism; it is equally true that we are one with one another in as true a sense as it is true that our physical bodies are one physical unity.

But if we cannot take in Paul's great thought we can grasp the other metaphor, in which he thinks of the Christian Church as a great fam-

ily of which God is the Father and in which all the different men and women sustain to one another a relationship of brotherly and sisterly love, such as bound the Master, Jesus Christ, the elder Brother, and His disciples together. Is that true of the Christian church to which we belong? Think of your church in your community. Is it a family in this sense? You know how our Lord looked forward to Heaven and made clear what it was to be, by speaking of it as His Father's house, the home, the meeting place of the family, where by and by when all the struggle and work of life are over the whole family will gather, as oftentimes the human family gathers at Christmas time or Thanksgiving Day—the elder children who have gone far away, the younger children who stayed at home—and the whole unbroken family sits down together in the evening, while the rich family love binds them together into one. That is what the Christian Church is meant to be—a gathering of men and women loving as brothers and sisters love one another; yes, even more than that, loving with the kind of love that Jesus Christ reveals in the family life of His own Father's home. How daringly Paul puts this in the Epistle to the Ephesians when he speaks of the relationship between Christ and His Church as being akin to what he calls that "great mystery," the most close of all human relationships, the relationship between husbands and wives!

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church." Both were to leave fathers and mothers, and cleave to one another, and be one. Here Paul says the great mystery comes in—even as Christ and His Church are one.

The dearest and most intimate home life of which we may know, that home where love binds together in the closest and most unclouded intimacy and confidence, where no angry word is ever heard, where no angry look is ever seen, where you breathe, as you cross the threshold, the atmosphere which you know to be of that other home, our Father's home—all this but symbolises to us the relationship that should exist between us as members of Christ's Church. We ought to feel a great wave of love sweeping over us, carrying us out of our lives of jealousy, envy, malice, bitterness, and evil, and welding us together in one deep consciousness of family life, loving as one body in which we are members one of the other. We ought to feel that the Christian Church came into the world not to be a form or a guild for worship, but to be first of all a loving union of men and women bound one to another in a consuming, absorbing, unselfish love.

Do we feel this in our hearts? Do we not feel it now as we think of the beauty of Christ's conception and ideal for His Church? Is there not a great outgoing of our life toward those other lives round about us, a great desire to be

more to them, to love them more unreservedly, to realise actually in our daily life what Paul meant when he said that we were all of us one body in Christ—suffering each of us with the rest, honoured each of us with the rest, lacking each of us with the rest? We are one body and Jesus Christ is Head over all.

Would that it were possible to make all the vital significance of this truth clear. Such unity as this is an essential condition of our securing the knowledge we need as Christians. There is no such thing as knowing Christ fully all by one's self. You may know a little bit of Christ all by yourself, but you will never know Christ fully outside of the brotherhood. It is only as we all know Christ together that any one of us can know Christ alone. I see one beauty in Him, you see another beauty in Him. It is only as we sit down side by side and each share with the other the beauty that we have seen that each of us can see Him in His perfect beauty. No single member of the Christian Church can draw off alone and apprehend Him or drink in the fulness of the glory of His perfect character. It is as we draw close together and love one another with great discerning love that we are able to apprehend the fulness that there is in Jesus Christ. Most of us get our truth from others. I can look back over the great lives from which almost all I have got has come to me. You can look out over the lives which

you know have made your life what it is. You can think of so and so. He gave you this thought about Christ. You can think of so and so. She showed you this beauty about Christ. It is as we all come to know Christ that any one of us shall come to know Him. It is only "with all saints" that we shall be able to comprehend what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. All may know what one can never know.

And there are some truths that we cannot see in any manner outside this Christian fellowship. It is only as our hearts are filled full of the love that binds all Christ's together that we can understand these truths. You remember that other verse in St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, "Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." There is that "all" again. We shall never come alone or apart; we shall never come into this unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God until we all come.

One of the pathetic things of our day is the way in which the Christian Church has lost what men outside are groping after. Here is the impulse that drives the socialistic movement of our day. It gets its power from proposing to supply what Christ came to give. He came

that the hunger and thirst of men's hearts for fellowship and equality should be satisfied. He preached here in this world nineteen hundred years ago a unity of life, closer, more intimate than any ever known outside of the Christian Church. Why shall we not go out into the world to say: "O world, looking for fellowship, seeking after unity of life, we have it all. Here is the secret of it, if you will come with us. And you will never find it unless you will come with us, and join this society of ours, the fellowship of God."

And just as such unity as this is essential to Christian knowledge, it is essential also to the efficiency of the service of Christ's Church in the world. It is all one body, says Paul, but there are diverse functions; different members have different duties to discharge. If all the body were an eye, where were the smelling? If all the body were an hand, where were the seeing? There are diverse functions, but it is all one body. What a blessing it would be if we could realise such a unity in Christian life and service! We do feel it at times. We belong to scores of different church bodies, but we are all one. These differences are as nothing to us as we sit together in the presence of Christ. In a real sense it is true that we are one mighty army and that our differences are merely divisional separations. But I suspect that many of us are missing God's personal spiritual blessing

for our lives because we do not carry the same great thought into our individual life—the thought that we are different members but one body, some set to be apostles, some prophets, some workers of miracles, some teachers, but one spirit running through us all, each with a peculiar mission and separate duty, but all one. There is a German riddle that asks what is the most wonderful thing that God has made. The answer is the human face, that He has made so many, and no two are alike. If He has made so many human faces in the world and no two of them alike, do you suppose He would duplicate His life plans? Do you not suppose that the great and rich Father of all our lives has for each one of us a fresh, original scheme of His own, a new, distinct idea for each of us? He does not mean that any one is simply to resemble somebody else. He means that each of us is to be our own true self, to realise that we are not to be like any one else save that we have the same spirit that flows through them. Each of us is to take up our own place and duty in the body, whether humble or honourable, each place glorious because we are all joined together to the one Head from Whom we draw our common glorious life.

And this ideal of unity is necessary not alone to our knowledge and service, but also to our prayer. The full power of prayer is found only when it is corporate. The relationship of

each one of us to God determines in some real way the relationship of every one of us to God. Nothing is more real in this world than answered prayer, than fellowship in prayer. No one of us can hope to realise in the prayer life all that is there for us until every one of us tries to realise what is there for us. It is only as we all pray that any one of us can pray in the fulness of the joy and power of prayer.

What a pathetic thing it is with so much dependent upon the realisation of Christ's ideal of unity for His people that we are willing to let that unity be impaired? You know the things that impair it. Falsehood destroys it. It is the ground on which Paul argues against falsehood. He does not say that lies are wrong because they are contrary to the character of God, although this is true. He does not say that lies are wrong because they are dishonourable, although this also is true. He says we cannot lie because it disintegrates the Christian society to lie.

"Put away all falsehood, therefore," he says, "and speak the truth one with another, because ye are members one of another." He realises that falsehood is like a sort of anarchy or disease in the body. And his conception is that the only way in which the body can be one is that it should have the absolute truth running through it all. Every little lie, black or grey or vermilion or white, by which we soil our lives,

constitutes just so much schism and sin against the unity of the body of Jesus Christ.

Malice and evil speaking, and all unkindliness impair the unity of this body. Oftentimes in our own churches Christ's body has been broken up through evil slander, gossip, unkindly speech. We have all at one time or another seen Christian fellowship impaired in this way. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" A perfect hell of power lies in these tongues! I remember when I first reached China, taking a walk with a friend through the streets of a Chinese village, and seeing for the first time a Chinese dog open his mouth. I stopped and asked my friend, "What is the matter with that dog's mouth?" The inside was not red like the inside of our dogs' mouths, but blue, as though he had been eating berries. My friend said: "Why, there is nothing the matter. That is the colour of the mouth of a Chinese dog." How many Christians there are who have the mouths of Chinese dogs, not red and clean as Christian mouths ought to be; but stained and defiled with malicious speaking, unkindly and ungenerous talk, with all that kind of conversation which is death to Christian unity. Will we backbite, be ungenerous and un-Christlike in our talk when we walk in all the sweetness and confidence of our Father's house? Shall we not resolve that we will cease from this sin of unkindly, un-Christlike speech,

to which Paul refers all through his Epistles as much as to any other sin save the sin of impurity, and thus promote the unity and harmony of the body of Christ?

And we know, last of all, what is to promote and increase this unity binding all Christians together into one. As we draw near Christ we draw near to one another even to the ends of the earth. Dr. Trumbull Backus used to say that he always knew as he looked over the report of the church treasurer on what days the communion services had fallen by the size of the missionary offering. Invariably whenever the offering fell on a communion Sunday the missionary offerings were from twenty-five to fifty per cent. greater than on any other day. On the days that the people drew nearest to Jesus, when their hearts were melted and tender with His love, on these days they drew near also to the uttermost parts of the earth. What draws us close to one another at any time is the fact that each one of us is drawn close to our Lord. If only each one of us had Him perfectly for our Head then all of us would be perfectly members one of another. Forgiveness draws us together, and there is nothing so severing and schismatic as the spirit of unforgiveness. If any one of us cherish in our hearts any bitter feeling, any animosity, any hatred against any other human soul, we are making it impossible that we should be true members of the Church of Christ. I

heard of a church once in which there were two brothers who would not speak to one another. Is it possible that any blessing of God could come down upon that church? If there is any hate in our hearts, any unkindliness, let us lay it aside. If there is any person in all this world against whom we are bearing a grudge, let us at once go or write a letter to that person forgiving him freely from our hearts now. If we forgive not our brothers their trespasses, neither will our Heavenly Father forgive our trespasses. There is nothing so much like the cross of Christ as forgiveness. When we have lifted up everything in our lives until all the self-pride, bitterness, malice, and envy are all dropped out of them, then we know in part what the cross meant to Christ, then our hearts all tender will be ready to enter into the secret of Christ's uniting love. And if we will draw, all of us, close to Him in a great common service, as well as in love and forgiveness, we shall find ourselves realising increasingly the communion of saints and the unity of the body of Christ.

Whatever may be the differences which separate all those who belong to Christ from one another here on the earth—the incidental differences of speech, of complexion, of manner of life, of history and tradition—back of all these the common love for our common Lord ought to bind us all together into one, be we Chinese, Japanese, African, Armenian, Bulgarian, Amer-

ican, or English. From whatever land we come, to whatever denomination we belong, whatever our social condition may be, if we are Christ's we are one another's also, and all of us are one body in Him. Jesus is waiting to reveal to us how one we are, how unreal are all the social and caste lines that divide us, how un-Christian all the lines of separation are that are run by wealth or education or social inheritance; that, after all, the one fundamental fact of the Christian life, if we have that life at all, is that we are God's, and therefore one with all who are God's; that I am your friend and you are my friend; what you have is mine and what I have is yours; your honour is my honour, and my shame your shame, and the sufferings of one the sufferings of us all. When we have learned this we shall have received the Christian inheritance and have entered into the experience of the repeated and solemn affirmation of our creed, "I believe in the Communion of Saints."

VIII

THE MASTER, THE MAKER OF STRONG HEARTS

"JESUS looked upon him, and said, Thou art Simon, the son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas (which is, by interpretation, Rock)." These words of our Lord were spoken on the day on which He called his first disciples. The day before John had borne testimony that He was the Lamb of God, and this day, seeing Jesus passing by, had gently constrained two of his disciples, John and Andrew, to leave him and follow Jesus. After they had satisfied themselves, Andrew found his brother Simon and brought him to Jesus.

I suppose there were some other people standing around when Andrew and Simon came; undoubtedly John must have been there; and one can imagine the looks of surprise, perhaps the play of a sneer on the lips of some, as Jesus spoke thus to Simon: "Thy name is Simon; thy name shall be Cephas, which is by interpretation, Rock." Simon, rock! Why, he was the most vacillating, changeable, unreliable fisherman on the sea of Galilee. We picture John and Andrew exchanging glances of astonishment at the idea of fickle Simon ever being called rock. Perhaps

the first influence of Christ's words upon Simon may have been the same. One can imagine the flush of shame that would rise to his cheeks as he was thus singled out for the gaze of the bystanders as the man who had been weak and changeable, but who was now to be called rock. "Rock," Simon would say to himself, "call me rock! This man is giving me a nickname, and taunting me." And then, back of the first flush and feeling of shame there came pulsing through all Simon's veins the sense of his discovery. He was ashamed of his fickleness. Nobody else taunted him with it with half the bitterness with which he taunted himself. Here, at last, he stood before a man who had discovered him, who had found out his own deepest sense of discontent, who was giving him a new name, and with the new name the promise of a new character. "I know thee, Simon," Jesus said; "I know thy reputation here; I have watched thee for many years, and know thee well as the man of most notorious uncertainty and vacillation of character to be found among the fisher folk here; and I know, too, that deep down in your soul you want a better character. Your name has been Simon; it shall be Rock." All Simon's soul must have thrilled, as he stood at last before a man who had thus found him in the depths of his life, and who promised him, with a new name, the satisfaction of the deepest longings of his heart.

We read that on the next day the Saviour was minded to go forth into Galilee, and He findeth Philip, who was of the village of Andrew and Peter. And when Philip had satisfied himself of the Saviour, he went to bring Nathanael to Him. And when Nathanael came, Jesus, seeing him, said to those who stood by, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" "Whence knowest Thou me?" was Nathanael's exclamation of surprise. Jesus's answer to him, though in form different, was in spirit the same that He had given to Simon Peter. He had discovered Simon at depths below the surface; He had promised Simon that which he was not, but which he wanted to be. He revealed now to Nathanael that he understood what lay back of the surface of his life, too. "I knew thy longings, Nathanael," He says, "as thou wast under the fig tree there. I knew thy meditations upon that ancient day when Jacob, not so far away, laid his head down by night on a pillow of stone, and the heavens were opened above him, and the angels of God ascended and descended above his head. Thou hast been wondering whether those old days would ever come back again, whether the privileges of such association with God, of such divine fellowship, were for the fathers and the patriarchs alone. Thy heart has been coveting an open heaven once again. Verily, I say unto thee, thine own eyes shall see the heavens open, and the angels of God ascending and de-

scending upon the Son of Man." I imagine there were no smiles among the bystanders this time, but deep down in Nathanael's soul there must have been the same pulsing sense of new discovery, the same sense of having been found at last by some one who knew what no other knew about the deeper longing of his heart, and who in the act of revealing him to himself had held out the promise also of fulfilling the aspirations of his soul.

Now there is one truth that lies right on the surface of these two sweet incidents in the early public life of our Lord. It is, that every man of us is two men, that every man is made up, first, of the man as he actually is on the surface, as perhaps he appears to himself, as certainly as he appears to his fellow men, and the deeper man underneath, as he may be, as God wants him to be, as perhaps the man himself longs to be, as Jesus Christ the Master of men can make him. And Jesus sees both of these two men. We read in the next chapter of this Gospel that He needeth not that any should bear witness of what is in a man, for He Himself knows all that is in man, all that there is of actual striving with sin and failure, all that there is of delicate desire after something holier and stronger that thus far has eluded the man. He knows the two men that are in each one of us, and He discovers them to Himself and to us.

Sometimes He finds the actual man without

better than the ideal man within. The man back of the curtain, where He Himself is piercing to the realities of the man, is basely different from the man as he appears to the world without. That was the case with Judas. Judas passed for a friend for three years. The very night of the betrayal not one of the Apostles could guess who the traitor was, but all the time Jesus knew that he was the one who was to betray Him. Back of the surface of fidelity He saw the treasonable heart. The real man in Judas as Jesus saw him was worse than the outer man in Judas as men saw him.

Sometimes one man is no better than the other, but all that there is in the man lies on the surface of his life. I think that was the case with the rich young ruler who came to Jesus, and whom Jesus, when He looked at him, loved. There was nothing more to the man than showed on the surface. The moment that Jesus put His finger on the core of the man's soul, He found that what was back of the man was no more than was on the surface of the man. There were no real longings that were not already realised in his life, so far as he was truly desirous that they should be. There were none of those deep dissatisfactions, those earnest discontents, those aspirations, hestitating at no price, after something beyond his experience that lay in other men whom Jesus touched. And the moment Jesus found his shallowness, that there was nothing to the man ex-

cept what showed, and discovered this to the man himself, the young man turned away from Christ.

There are other men in whom what does not appear is better than what does, in whom the hidden ambition of the life, unknown of men, is a holier and a better thing than the life that thus far men have seen. That was the case with Simon. There he stood, the object lesson of vacillation and pliability. Deep down in his soul was a discontent with that reputation, a desire after a solid, steadfast character; and Jesus, looking into him, saw that the surface of his life covered over this better and deeper and richer longing within. "Thou art called Simon," He said to him; "thy name shall be Rock."

And just as our Lord Jesus Christ was discovering men when He was here He is discovering men still. He is here now with each of us, scrutinising alike the surface and the core of our lives. How does He find us? Does He find no more back of the surface than lies upon the surface? There are many men who are clean, decent fellows, not intending to commit any crime, with their wills firmly set to hold aloof from all coarse vice and sin, men who pass as good fellows in the world, sociable, more or less Christian men, and that is all that can be said of them. There is nothing back of the life that is not on the surface of it. Does Christ find any of us so, with no longings beyond our attain-

ments, with no desires behind that which lies already printed plain on the surface of our lives?

Maybe He finds some of us worse than we appear. Outside we are clean, but we are tainted within. We have been passing as leaders; we may have been called to foremost positions in Christian service; we may be looked upon at home as clean and Christian men, and down at the core of our lives there may be something despicable and defiling. Maybe we are gentlemen without while inside we are rottenness and dead men's bones, outside clean and attractive to the sight of men, while we carry with us inferiority and vileness of spirit within. As Jesus, with those eyes of flame that pierce the very joints and marrow, scrutinises our lives, does He find us actually worse as His eyes see us than we show ourselves to men, or even to ourselves?

Perhaps He finds us better than we appear. Perhaps as He looks upon us He sees more in us than we have seen even in ourselves as yet, and far more in us than our friends see. Maybe they are calling us Simon. Maybe they say: "Yes, I know that fellow. He pretends to be a Christian man. You cannot place any reliance on his word; there is no solidity in his character; it is all profession and no reality beneath"; while Jesus sees within a deep sickness of soul, a hungering and thirsting after that which we know better than any other man that we are not. Pos-

sibly, looking upon us, Christ does find us tarnished without, but longing to be cleansed and free within. Some time ago a little fellow from a Southern college said to me: "I am tempted dreadfully with evil thoughts, and when I fear that I am going to be tempted and I fight against them, the thoughts come all the more—just at the time when I hate them the most and most desire to be free from them. The very fact that I strive to avert their coming brings them on, and I fight day and night against them. How shall I free myself from them?" Now any man looking on this boy's life without, as he looked on his own life without, saw tarnish and stain, saw the soil and the defilement of the evil, but only Jesus saw beneath the passion of disgust at it all, the great longing desire to be free, while yet the desire to be free only forged the chains, as it seemed to him, more strongly upon him. It may be that there are some of us worse soiled than by evil thoughts alone, tarnished without, yet who, as Jesus sees us, are longing for cleanliness and purity within. Possibly, as we look on the outside of our lives, and as our fellows look upon them, they are coarse and selfish lives, heavy with all sorts of narrow desires and tastes and aspirations, while all the time deep within we want to be unselfish. Our self-consciousness is felt to be a curse by us; that emphasis upon our own will and our own ways that shuts us out from richest generosity of spirit is

more detestable to us than it could be to any one else. Maybe we are very conscious of our want of attainment, but full of eagerness and keen desire to get hold of that which is best and which we most truly need. Jesus, looking upon us, sees us not alone full of the failure of the outer shortcomings, but beautiful with the inner desire to be perfect and unselfish and true.

Perhaps as Jesus looks down upon us He sees, as no other man sees, the intense and bitter struggle with the disposition to be satisfied with something less than what is best. Perhaps as He looks upon us to-day, just as He looked upon Simon Peter that spring day by the shores of the sea of Galilee, He sees us, as He saw him, weak, pliable, fickle, unreliable men without in our relations with other men, possibly in our control over ourselves; but back of all He sees the irrepressible sickness with ourselves, the great desire that He Who said to Simon, "I know you, you shall be called Rock," should say that same thing to us to-day: "I know you, unreliable, impulsive, uncertain, and yet eager also to be firm set in truth and righteousness. You shall become what you desire."

Now, it would be a dreary message simply that Jesus sees through us, that we cannot play off any sham on Him, that He knows exactly what is hypocrisy in us and what is reality, that His eyes can never be stayed on the outside but will drive home clear to the inner truth of our

souls. It would be a poor message if we could only console our hearts with the thought that Jesus Christ cannot be cheated in us. It was not enough for Him that day on the shores of the sea to say, "Simon, I know you, I know your reputation on this coast, I know your character thoroughly"; He went on to hold out to him the promise of becoming that which he was not, of being that which he longed to be. "Thy name has been Simon: thou shalt be called Rock." And Jesus is looking down upon us now, not alone clearly distinguishing just the sort of men we are, but holding out to us also His promise to make us the kind of men we would like to be, and to remould us, defaced, blemished, scarred, incomplete, howsoever we may be, into the likeness of His own perfect and glorious image. "Thy name has been Simon: thou shalt be called Rock."

There is something wonderfully attractive, something that speaks home to the conscious needs of our hearts, in this thought of the stability and power of Christ, which He is able to impart to us, and to make a part of our own personal character and life. From the very beginning Israel loved to conceive religion so. They were ever speaking of the Lord God as their everlasting Rock Who could not be moved, in Whom they could stand impregnable and unassailable. Moses sang, "He is the rock, His work is perfect: ascribe ye greatness unto our

God. For their rock is not as our rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." And there was David, in the day when the Lord delivered him out of the hands of his enemies and out of the hand of Saul, singing, "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strong rock, in Him will I trust; my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower." And there is yet again his cry in one of the psalms that is attributed to him: "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I call unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For Thou hast been a refuge for me, and a strong tower from the enemy." A poor people hunted out of their own land, driven to and fro over the surface of the earth, who found no shade of trees, but who dwelt only under the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, Israel loves to lean still on the Lord God its rock. An old Jewish legend is said to be referred to in Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, where we are told that all through the wilderness journeys the rock that Moses smote in the wilderness followed Israel, and they drank of that rock. And that rock, Paul says, was Christ. And the very core of all religion lies in this, the binding back of life into its solid moorings in God. Religion is the taking of that which is adrift, of that which is out chartless and masterless, and bringing it home to

its just relations in the impregnable and enduring God.

Jesus stands waiting to set our feet in rock; and it does not matter where we go, we shall need each one of us to have Him do in us this mighty ministry. Some of us may be going into business life. We shall need nothing more as we go there than that He should set our feet securely in an immovable righteousness and steadiness of character. Mr. Richard Croker is not an admirable man, but there are two things that are said to his credit. One is that he speaks his mind without fear, and the other is that he keeps his word without falsehood. Some time ago the *Evening Telegram* printed an interview with him, in which he was reported to have said: "I don't propose to pose as an adviser to the young men of this city, but speaking solely from my personal observation, I should say that all that is necessary for the truly ambitious young man to do is to possess himself of those principles which go to make up the practical business man, and those are, in my judgment, first of all, integrity, pluck, perseverance and sobriety." The same truth was better said by a better man in "Under the Old Elm."

"The longer on this earth we live,
And weigh the various qualities of men,
Seeing how most are fugitive
Or fitful gifts at best of now and then,
Wind-wavered, corpse-lights, daughters of the fen,

The more we feel the high, stern-featured beauty
Of plain devotedness to duty.
Steadfast and still; not fed with mortal praise:
But finding amplest recompense
For life's ungarlanded expense
In work done squarely and unwasted days."

If we are going out into business life, let Jesus speak to us His message of power and turn us from pliable Simon into enduring Rock, making us rigid with His righteousness.

Every one of us, whatever his or her particular work is to be, must expect to be tried by seven times hotter temptations than have ever tried us before. Every fresh privilege is only a fitting of men for fresh temptation. And we can be sure as we go out with larger powers to fight with that which is vicious and evil, that we shall have more of it to struggle against. Temptations will come to us with fresh power. The adversary in yet more insidious ways will creep subtly in and try us at some new place. We shall need Christ to stand by us and put rock in us, need Christ to stand by us and make us steadfast to fight against him who fights against us, to clothe ourselves with all the armour of God and then to stand, and having done all, to stand still, until at last, having overcome, we sit down by Christ upon His throne, as He overcame and was set down by the Father upon His throne.

Some may have to stand all alone in their col-

leges or circles of companions. It is an awful thing to try and pull other men up to a higher spiritual level. There is no other work in this world that drains men so, that tears the very soul as the attempt to make plain to other men some larger spiritual vision and to turn them to its obedience. It would be a far easier thing to go out and plough. Many will have to stand alone in this way. May Jesus, who Himself stood, help us to stand and breathe into us the very disposition of stone. In all of our service of Christ, wherever we go now, or whatever we are to do, we need to be given, each one of us, more of that new character which came to Simon when Jesus found him and gave him his new name.

One of the wonderful things about our Lord Himself was the way He stood against everything that assailed Him whether from within or from without, and counted nothing too great a sacrifice for His ministry and His Father's love, the way at last, when all turned against Him, when every disciple fled, when even John turned and left with the rest. He remained unmoved, immovable. Some of you will recall the old lines of Irving Brown in the *Albany Law Journal,* back of which as we read them rises the vision of the enduring and the immovable Christ, in which he contrasted the lions of Trafalgar and Lucerne.

"The drowsy lions of Trafalgar lie,
With pride and conquest sated,
Round about the victor's column.

Travellers pass by without a glance
And oftener without a thought of all the glory buried there
That makes the Lion Island's fame so fair.

"Thou solitary lion of Lucerne
Defeated, gasping on an alien shield,
To thee the strangers' steps in fondness turn,
Thou dying majesty.
To thee we yield the tribute due to loyalty and love,
Unshaken as the solid cliff above."

So may our Lord Jesus Christ, Who so stood that all the powers of hell could not shake Him in His standing, give us of His own strength to stand with Him.

I stood some years ago outside the wall of the city of Seoul, in Korea, on the banks of the river Han, and I thought of that great scene thirty years before, when the Tai Won Kun, who for nearly a generation was the baleful curse of that land, ordered the death of all the Catholic Christians of Korea, and they were brought down, thousands in number, to the shores of the Han. The priests and the bishops had arrows thrust through the lobes of their ears and the muscles of their chests, and were obliged to run up and down the sandy bank of the Han until they fell exhausted, and one by one the multitude of Koreans, women, men, and little children, poor, simple people, deemed by the Japanese and Chinese alike as cast off in the world and feeble, knelt down, and for their Master, Jesus Christ,

were willing to die, and did die, until the water of the Han ran red to the Yellow Sea. That scene was later brought back by a letter from a missionary in the city of Ning-po in China, describing a meeting of the Synod of southern China, about the time of the Boxer storm, in which in a farewell address the oldest minister in the Synod rose and spoke to his friends of the fiery trials which he felt were coming upon all who confessed Jesus Christ in China. He advised the other pastors to prepare their people by reading to them from the Bible the passages about the martyrs of the early Church, and to tell them the stories of the Christian Church through all the ages, that they might be made ready to stand immovable, steadfast, and true, in the day of fire and of sword.

Feeble as dust, fickle, changeable, unreliable Simons, all of us, needing each of us to have given to him the strength which Christ possesses, once again, as in the days of old by Tiberias, the Master stands offering to change every man from Simon to Peter, to take us just as we are, no matter how unsatisfactory, vacillating, untrue, and make us by His grace, Rock, rigid Rock.

IX

THE MASTER'S WORK FOR HIS FOLLOWERS

IN the beginning of the great prayer of our Lord which is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John, occurs this sentence: "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."

Surely none but the lips of Christ would have dared to utter these words. What is peculiar and personal in them, however, is not the idea that our Master had a work given Him by God to do. I think we are at times disposed to think that that was the distinctive and peculiar thing in the life of Jesus, and unmistakably it was an emphatic thing. How many times He Himself refers to it! "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." "He that sent Me is with Me; He hath not left Me alone, for I do always those things that please Him."

Because Jesus was often insisting upon this and because so manifestly what Jesus was about in this world was the work of God, we are some-

times led to think that His life evidenced a working of God which we may not be privileged to have in our lives, and we often draw the line of distinction between our Lord and ourselves here, admitting that God had given to Him a great work to do in this world and admitting sadly that we do not believe that He can or intends to give us any such work. But surely instead of being most remote from us at this point, it is precisely here that Jesus Himself fully reveals the real and essential significance of our life; instead of setting Himself off from all other men in declaring that He had a work given Him of God to do, He was ranging Himself in this with all His brethren. We as truly as He have each one of us a specific God-assigned work in the world.

Jesus often touches upon this truth in His parables. He tells us that the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a householder who went off into a far country, leaving to each of his servants his own work. And He makes it plain that this is not alone the work of each servant for himself, but God's work for each servant. The work which we are trying to do in this world is our work surely enough, but it is not our work for ourselves in any such true sense as it is God's work for us, and we get the chief comfort and contentment out of our lives from that conviction. The truest joy which any man can find in his life is in perceiving in it some unfolding

of God's purpose and in recognising in the thing that he is trying to do not a work that he has picked up at random here, but a particular piece of work set for him, set for him long before he himself ever came into this world, by the loving purpose of his Father.

Conceive for a moment the irresistible strength and power of such a conception of life as this. Not every man can do everything that he will, but every man can do everything that God wills that he should do, and neither life nor death, principalities nor powers, things present nor things to come, can prevent any man from doing in this world the work which God wants him to do if the man will take his work from the hands of God and do it.

This is no narrow conception of life. To hold this view of life does not require a man to narrow his thought of the things allowable to him within the limits of a certain few occupations and duties. John Tauler was telling the truth when, seven hundred years ago, he wrote:

"Every art or work, however unimportant it may seem, is a gift of God; and all these gifts are bestowed by the Holy Ghost for the profit and welfare of men. Let us begin with the lowest. One can spin, another can make shoes, and some have great aptness for all sorts of outward arts. These are all gifts proceeding from the Spirit of God. If I were not a priest, but were living as a layman, I should take it as a great

favour that I knew how to make shoes, and should try to make them better than any one else, and should gladly earn my bread by the labour of my hands. There is no work so small, no art so mean, but it all comes from God and is a special gift of His. Thus let each do that which another cannot do so well, and for love, returning gift for gift."

It was the same perception of a divine truth that led his friends to inscribe on the tombstone of David Golf in Scotland: "David Golf, Shoemaker by the grace of God." Any work which God assigns to a man is worthy work for that man to do, and if it be very humble and secular as men regard it, it is yet the most spiritual and divine work that the man can take up, if God gave it to him.

On the other hand, this conception of life does not tolerate any maudlin breadth. There are young men in our colleges who are answering the missionary call by saying that they expect to stay at home and earn money for missions. There is not a verse in the Bible that justifies a man in believing that God has ever called or ever will call a man primarily to make money, and I have never been able to persuade myself from studying the character of God that He would do such a thing as that. There are men whom God calls to some living spiritual service who earn money by the way, and they are bound to administer that money as a trust; but I do not believe

that God is opening before any man, or ever has opened before any man, the door to escape from a living spiritual service under the pretext that he is to earn money that the spiritual service of other men many be maintained. William Carey said that he cobbled shoes to pay expenses, and that is all that cobbling shoes or stock-broking or keeping a bank is good for, either to pay expenses or to serve men. The real purpose of a man's life is to pay expenses in these ways and to use himself, use himself utterly in the living work of God. It is a fine thing that God makes work His gift and not money and not fame, nor this thing nor that thing, but just living work, and that every day He gives to each man of us a work for that day and offers to us the joy of conceiving it as a personal partnership with Himself. "To every man his work."

In the second place, it is a possible thing for every man to discover just what the work of God for him in this world is. There is not one man who cannot discover the precise work which God has for him to do. As a matter of fact, God is more anxious that we should discover that work than we are to discover it. We often torture ourselves with the contrary thought, supposing that we are anxious beyond God to get into just our right place in this world, whereas, all the time, the living God Himself, to Whom our life is of more importance than it is to us, has been far more anxious to guide us into

that precise place which He has made for us than we are to be guided.

Not only can each of us find what the work of God for us in this world is, but each of us must find that work. Life is a wasted thing, life is missing its real purpose here in the world, life is sin—which simply is missing the purpose—until we have discovered for ourselves what God's work and will for us may be.

I. How can we discover the work of God for us in the world? First of all, God does not propose to reveal it to us by any ecstatic emotion or by any mechanical external pressure. God has guided men in these ways; but no man has any right to demand that God should guide him so. When God works within my heart, will not His workings be so perfect that they will seem to be the motions of my own heart? God will not coerce our spirits; He will not in any objective way throttle our liberties. Whatever guidance we get from God will be in the way of the movings of the Spirit of God along the channels of the orderly activities of our own life.

II. In the second place, as Horace Bushnell points out in his great sermon, "Every Man's Life a Plan of God," there are certain things that must be excluded. We must exclude, first of all, the desire to be singular. The man who is ambitious for some peculiar thing, who is tying God down to the revelation of some individual and singular project for himself, is pre-

venting that divine leading which is only given to the soul that is pliable in His hand.

Second, we must exclude the copying of any other man's life. I look at my friend and his life so rich in all strengths and blessings, so set in all rigidity of truthfulness, so strong and clean in all its human ministries, and I want to pattern my life after his. The rich God is too rich to give me the cast-off clothes of another man's life. He proposes for me an original and vital project of my own, and He does not expect me as I seek His will for myself to ape the life of any other man.

Thirdly, we must exclude insistence upon knowing the whole thing at the beginning. That was the difficulty of some of the disciples on the last night. "Lord," said one of them to Him, "we know not whither Thou goest; how can we know the way?" Men are perpetually making that mistake, thinking that unless they can see the goal they cannot see the road thither. Now, the living God cannot reveal to any man his whole life. We have as yet no intellectual conceptions in which to phrase our future life to ourselves. If Christ should unveil it before us it would be to us a strange and unintelligible thing. We must be content to take God's guidance of our lives step by step as we are able to bear it.

III. Now, with these warnings, in the third place, consider, first of all, the character of God.

That makes it impossible for any man to be a saloon keeper or go into the business of keeping a dive. God could not approve it, and whatever is inconsistent with the character of God, it is not possible for any Christian man to do. Now that may seem like a very obvious suggestion, but apply it and see what a great swath it cuts through life. How many things that perhaps we have been cherishing as possible become instantly impossible the moment we sit down to estimate them again in the light of what we believe to be the character of God!

Let us consider, in the second place, our own relation to God, as men who belong to Him, who have no right to set ourselves up in the world in business independently of God, who are here, as His workmanship, our whole life depending upon Him. Whatever we do in life must be something that recognises our utter dependence upon God.

Let us take account, thirdly, of our own moral judgments. Many a man makes his life decision in the face of the light that shines in his own moral life. He sins; he knows he sins. When a man deliberately follows some selfish end when there is opened up before him an unselfish service he is sinning, and he knows that he is sinning against his own moral judgment. On the other hand, a man may unconsciously walk into sin with the approval of his moral judgment. Not everything that my moral judgment tells

me is right, is right. The thugs committed murder with the most religious motives; are they therefore justified in their course? The fact that a man's moral judgment allows him to do a thing does not justify him in doing it. While a man must consult his moral judgment and do nothing that his moral judgment condemns, it is not enough for any man to say that his moral judgment approves. Is his moral judgment right?

In the fourth place, he must consult, therefore, that one corrective of a man's moral judgment—the law of God as revealed in the Word of God. It was given us for the purpose of setting erroneous moral judgments right and for establishing those standards of life which are to be the norm of our moral judgment.

In the fifth place, let each of us consult his own friends. They know us. We need to consult our friends, although we may disregard their advice. Many times men are called to do this; and many are first born into the real sense of what it is to be a man by refusing to follow the advice of friends. Not every father's advice even is infallible. And many a time a man will consult his friends and follow their advice, and many a time also he will consult his friends and not follow their advice.

He must consult also not alone his friends, but that greatest Friend of all Who is perpetually guiding man's life by the providences that surround it and are shaping it. Who brought you

here? God. Who forced on your mind the consideration of a certain line of life work? God. You may say the considerations that are pressed on you to take up that life work are considerations that would force every man into it. No, they are not, and you know that that is no honest reason; for God brought you to face those considerations; He did not bring other men to face those considerations. I may stand on the shore of a river where there are drowning souls, and I may say that no obligation rests on me to save those drowning souls that does not rest also on every man, but I know that I am playing with the truth in saying this; not every man is standing on the bank of the river, and I am. Not every man is looking out on the world of need to-day; you are, and you are looking out upon it because God brought you face to face with it, and because there is a loving providence in your life guiding and directing you toward its need. This is a thing to be weighed now by you or it may be weighed some day against you.

Last of all, it is necessary for each of us, having guarded ourselves against these dangers and having followed these various courses of help, to go straight to God with the matter and to trust Him to guide us, and then walk straight forward with a quiet heart, certain that He has guided us as we have asked Him that He should. God has a work for each of us to do, a particular individual work that will never be done in

this world unless he to whom it is assigned does it, and He has given us the means of discovering that particular work of His for us.

IV. In the fourth place, this is the thing that the man is to *do*. "The work," says Jesus, "which Thou hast given Me to *do*." And you know how Jesus did it. His disciples came back and they marvelled as they saw Him sitting by Jacob's well talking with a woman, and they said, "Hath any man brought Him aught to eat?" And Jesus said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." And you know how He poured His life into the doing of that will so that, as His disciples said, the zeal of His Father's house ate Him up. He even took no leisure so much as to eat. Every true life that has walked with Him and has learned the secret of His life has *done* thus the work that God has given it to do.

All the great things that have ever been accomplished in this world have been accomplished by men who had a will to work. Take the life of Richard Knill. Where was the secret of that? In the advice that Venning, the philanthropist, gave him: "Knill, labour for Jesus Christ as long as you have a drop of blood in your body." Take the life of T. H. Huxley. What was the secret of it? The motto of his life: "Like the stars, without haste, without rest." Take the life of Samuel Bowles. Friends said to him, "Mr. Bowles, you are ruining your

health with overwork." "I have the lines drawn," was his reply, "and the current flowing, and by throwing my weight here now I can count for something. If I make a long break or parenthesis to get strong I shall lose my opportunity. No man is living a life worth living unless he is willing, if need be, to die for somebody or something."

And so St. Paul in his talk with the Ephesian elders at Miletus: "I count not my life as dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." I like the missionary enterprise on this account; because it sets before us a definite divine work in the world to do and gives a man a chance to spend his life in doing it. Yes, it gives him a chance, if he wants it, to lay down his life in doing it. And, after all, what was life given to men for? Many of us are content to make a living, live a comfortable, quiet, decent life, and then at the end turn over and die; and that will be the end of it all—no great thrilling passion in it, no great divine visions overcoming it and overpowering it, no great sympathy with Jesus Christ in His work of sacrifice and of service in the world. But was life given men to nurse in velvet and to keep as long as they could? Life was given to men to burn up, to spend and to spend out clear to the end. Some Christians do not realise this,

but to others the view of the Saviour regarding His own priceless life has been given, and they see that life is a trust to be used, not a treasure to be hoarded. As a mother wrote of the death of a daughter killed during the Boxer troubles in China:

"The bitterest part of our trial was the faithless reproaches of fellow Christians because of what they called the waste of such valuable lives. My soul was literally torn with anguish by such words. They seemed to reflect dishonour on our Lord, and my constant prayer is that He may vindicate Himself and His servants, so that no one can doubt that all has been according to His wise purpose.

"Personally, we have gone through the Valley of the Shadow—but He has been with us, and the days of our deepest sorrow have been the days of His greatest nearness. We have been like distressed children clinging close to the strong and loving Father's side, and it has been sweet to be made so conscious of His protection. The earthward side of my dear one's death is very dark, mysterious; but I thank God for the glory of the heavenward side. I thank Him, too, that the suffering was at longest measured by hours, but the glory is for eternity. Oh, what a Master we serve; what an inheritance He has purchased for us!"

Many a man who is moving around with grey hair, having lived out a long term of years,

has wasted his life; but those missionary martyrs had not wasted theirs when they laid them down there, in their fresh beauty, in northern China. Jesus Christ did not waste His life when He died at the age of thirty-three upon a cross when He might have lived on, if He had wanted to, ten, twenty, thirty, forty years more. He conceived that life was given to Him to spend, and He spent it in doing the work that His Father had given Him to do.

In Leonard Huxley's life of his father you will find a letter in which Huxley speaks of the death of Chinese Gordon at Khartoum in the Soudan. Chinese Gordon was the man whom above all other men, unless it was Darwin, Huxley admired, deeming him the most refreshing personality of that generation, and he is speaking in this letter to Sir John Donnelly of Gordon's strange death in the Soudan; and he says: "I imagine that the manner of his death was not unwelcome to himself. Better wear out than rust out, and better break than wear out." For what was life given to men for except to fling it with all the energy and power that it holds against sin and for the thing that is right and good and holy in the world? Each of us has a work to do, and must do that work while life lasts, as Jesus Christ had a work to do and made it His meat and His drink to do it and to bring it to a finished end.

V. I said at the beginning that no lips but

our Lord's would ever have dared to speak those words, and I said also that what was peculiar and individual in them was not the fact that Jesus had a work given Him of God to do. I would say now that the thing that was distinctive and peculiar was the fact that Jesus was able to say, "I have *finished* My work." Nobody else in this world ever said that. Each one of us looks at his work as he has done it up to this day. If he should die to-day much of it would have to be undone, and the man who tried to pick it up would be torn with the splinters that are sticking out from it. It is no finished, polished piece of work as Christ's was. Some of you may have seen in one of the marine journals a little while ago an interview with President Hill of the Great Northern, in which he spoke of men's experience in taking hold of the life work of other men who had gone before them, of the necessity that they had been put to of undoing much of it, of the ambition which he felt to do a man's work in such a way that when he let it go nobody would need to undo any of it. And beyond that, even if a man is able to leave his work so that other men can take it up and find no imperfection in it, how much is there yet of shortcoming in it all, things we wanted to do that we never did. Leonard Huxley writes of his father, that his hands were full of a great burden of investigations he wished to make that were incomplete, and there were scores of questions

in his mind that he wanted time and strength to consider, but for which time and strength were not given. What human life is there of which we could not say that? And the richer and the more glorious it is, the fuller it is of unfinished and uncompleted projects.

And even beyond all this, long before we have ever got to the end of our race our strength has failed us and our pace has lagged and we have fallen short of our own ideals for ourselves. There is not one of us who carries his bat through to the end of the game. Long before the game is ended we have grown tired and have fallen down.

I said that no lips but Christ's could ever say, "I have finished my work." Some of you may be remembering words that the Apostle Paul wrote that seem to contradict that statement. It was his ambition to finish his work. "I count not my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my course with joy"; and he wrote, in the last of his Epistles, "I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course." But did he finish his *work?* He finished his *course* and came to the end, to be sure, but did he finish his *work?* Why, men are fighting to this day over the work of the Apostle Paul who are agreed over the work of Christ. The work of Jesus stands complete, polished, finished. No man can add one word to it or subtract one word from it. You cannot say as much as that even of the work of the

Apostle Paul himself. Alone of all those who have ever lived, Jesus finished His work. He carried it through to the end. All the shame of that dark hour and the stinging pains of those nails in His hands and His feet did not obscure His vision of His work. He opened there in the last hour of all the gates of the kingdom of heaven to one of His dying companions; He prayed that the Father might forgive the murderers who knew not what they did, and He made a home for His mother. At the very end He was rounding out the perfect work of His life. Men now and then have come near to that. It is told of old Father Taylor, the seaman's chaplain in Boston, that once in his old age, when he was in his dotage, he came in a corridor to a great mirror and he saw an old man there. Not recognising it as himself, he went up to him, and he said: "Old man, I wish you would come to Christ; you haven't very much life left. Your sun will soon set; the night of death is just ahead. Forsake your sins now and come to Christ before it is too late." And you know that among the last things recorded of John Eliot, apostle to the Indians, was the scene described by one who went in and found him on his death bed. There was a little Indian girl standing by the bed, and John Eliot was teaching her the alphabet; and when somebody remonstrated with him because he was using up his strength and overtaxing himself, he reminded

them of Christ. Jesus finished His work. He finished His work in the sense that until the very end He was rounding it out to completeness. He finished it also in the sense that He did it absolutely truly—no omitted thing in His life; no committed thing that He afterwards repented and grieved for. We measure our own life over against His to-day, besmirched and ragged, torn through with schism and rent and imperfection. Who are we that we should even be given a work of the Father to do like Christ's? And yet if it be true that the work given us is God's work for us to do, we may hope also that it is God's work for us also to complete it, and that if we try to round out perfectly this day, filling it with as much loving ministry, as much abhorrence of sin, as much detestation of every evil way, as much tenderness toward little children, as much love of what is pure and worthy and beautiful as we can, by His grace at last it may be possible for us also to say, as Christ said: "I have glorified Thee on the earth. I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do"; and until then we have no ambition that it should end.

"I ask no heaven till earth be Thine,
No glory crown while work of mine
Remaineth here. When earth shall shine
Among the stars,
Her sins cast out, her captives free,
Her voice a music unto Thee,
For crown, more work give Thou to me.
Lord, here I am."

X

THE BURNING HEART

THERE passed away a few years ago from the United States Senate one of the most conspicuous of our national politicians. Some would be disposed to say one of the most notorious, but it is only fair, both to him and to the nation, to say one of the most conspicuous. One of the ablest of the New York daily papers, the day after his death, published a just and discriminating analysis of his character, in which the man's good qualities were fairly recognised. Attention was called to his moderation, to his restraint, to his usual clear-headedness, and to his patience. Those were the Christian qualities of the man. But the editorial went on to point out that side by side with great good qualities like these the man was marked by fundamental weaknesses. He was without the imagination, the fine sense of public feeling, the look beyond mere tactical advantages, that the statesman needs. He lacked the perception and the inspiration of vital beliefs; the genuine enthusiasm for a principle vitally believed in he seemed never to have shared or understood. These were the great Christian qualities that the man lacked. He

had no great vision of the truth; he never knew what it was to have made a great moral choice of the truth as against all falsehood, and there never burned in him any deep and intense devotion to a principle for its own sake or to the truth even until death. And those are the three qualities, surely, which are essential to a true character: a clear perception of the truth, a decisive moral choice of the truth, an intense service of the truth with all the zeal of the soul.

Now every effort has been made in God's education of us to confront each one of us with a clear statement of the truth. Again and again appeal has been made to us to make a deliberate moral choice of the truth and the right. And the remaining question is whether, as we look out upon the scenes of daily life, we are going to carry with us into the testings and the services and the duties of the days that intense spirit of devotion, that genuine earnestness of heart, without which we will not be able to keep either the vision of the truth or the choice of the truth which we may have made, and without which we shall not be able to make that impress on the world which God has commissioned us to make. I do not know how better to state this quality of character than in one phrase in the twelfth chapter of Romans, the phrase which is found in the heart of the verse that runs, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

Now, that word "fervent" does not do justice to the word which Paul used. The word that Paul wrote means literally "boiling." Paul's idea was of a man with a hot and burning heart. Let us tone the word down, if we wish to, and call it simply "earnestness," a real devotion to the thing to which we have now committed our lives. Is that earnest glow now really burning in our hearts?

We need this earnestness in the warfare in which we are now engaged, in which we are to continue to be engaged, with evil and with sin. It would be a fine thing if we might believe some of the counsels that are spoken to us, that these lives of ours were meant to be dress parades, that there is no enemy to fight, that all that we need to do is just to shut our eyes to the foe and that that extinguishes him. We know perfectly well that we are engaged in a war. As St. Paul says, in Myers' words:

> "Battle I know as long as life remaineth,
> Battle for all."

It will not deliver us from the reality of that battle to try to be nice toward sin. Sin only asks of us that we should persuade ourselves that it does not mean to fight in order to thrust us in the back the moment we have begun to trust that the war is done. From the beginning to the end of the Bible it is military metaphor.

I do not know what those men are going to do with the moral message of the Bible who make Christian experience a gentle and uncontroversial thing. The whole New Testament is full of the idea that Christianity is a strife, and that the man who takes up the Christian life takes up a struggle that will never close until his life closes, and maybe not then. We are told repeatedly there that we have great enemies who are waiting for our souls, that we wrestle not with flesh and blood—that were an easy conflict—but with principalities and powers and with the spirits of darkness, who lie in hiding for us when we are least aware. Our adversary, the devil, goes up and down like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, whom we are bidden to resist steadfast in the faith. And you remember the vivid verse in the beginning of the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the writer of the Epistle evidently has in mind the young Hebrews or Hebrew Christians of his day, I suppose the second Christian generation, and is comparing the fight which they were making against sin with the kind of fight which their fathers had made and the old Jewish heroes and heroines before them. "Seeing," he says, "that we are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. As for you, you have not begun to fight yet. Ye

have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin." Now, all the context is a story of men and women who resisted unto blood, some of whom were sawn asunder, others of whom were torn with wild beasts; and in comparison with all that devotion to righteousness and that willingness to battle even to death against sin, the writer of the Epistle speaks to the young men of his day and says, "As for you, you have not yet offered the manly resistance of your blood." You remember the picture in "The Seawolf" of the man who was put to work, unaccustomed to such toil, amid the ropes of the rigging, and compelled to work until the ends of his fingers were worn off and the blood ran over his hands. Well, that is the kind of fight that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews thinks men ought to wage against sin. And, after all, all life that is worth anything is the letting out of blood, whether it is in the accomplishing of good or in the suppression of evil. Somebody asked Quintin Hogg once, the founder of the Polytechnic Institute of London, a man who put a large fortune into the accomplishment of his work, but who laid down something beside that was worth more than a fortune, "Mr. Hogg, how much does it cost to build up an institute like yours?" "Only one man's life blood," was Mr. Hogg's reply. And how much does it cost to wage a successful warfare against sin? Only one man's life blood. Every heroic story of

conflict with sin has been written with ink of blood. Every separate achievement and victory in it has been won by the letting out of life; and if you and I are to wage any warfare at all in this conflict that gives promise of success we must go into it with intense and burning hearts.

Now, one great difficulty with the religion of our day, I think, is just here. There is an anæmic softness that has come over it that leads a great many men to loosen their grip on the old militant purpose of a warfare against sin. There is a passage in Cardinal Newman's "Apologia" in which he sets forth his idea of a real religion, and frankly expresses his wish that the religion of Great Britain were fiercer and gloomier and more terrible than he found it to be. I think in our own land it would be a better thing if our religion were a little fiercer, if we got into it more of that spirit that we put into some of our non-religious conflicts, if we understood that in this great battle for our souls we are to fight with evil and wickedness even to the knife, and with the knife to the hilt. When Christ masters men's hearts they will blaze as His blazed against sin.

And sometimes this will involve violent conflicts with men. There are bad men in the world, and we are not meant to go hand in glove with all men. We are meant now and then to confront our man. It is all very well to say

that the battle with sin is to be an impersonal battle, and indeed we should keep it so just as long as we can. We are to hold on even to the bad men with the truest love, but there are men who go beyond the bounds; there are men who put themselves where at last the only thing for Christian men to do is to confront them and fight them as themselves the emissaries and the friends and the incarnation of that evil against which we must manage somehow to drive home and war in the name and spirit of Christ, who made no compromise with it even though it cost Him His life. We may be sure that as we go out through life we shall only go in the spirit that makes victory certain if we go with burning hearts of hatred against all evil and sin.

Now, there are four different attitudes that men take toward sin. There is the attitude of indulgence, there is the attitude of indifference, there is the attitude of ignorance, and there is the attitude of indignation. It is a good thing for a man to be ignorant of such sin as he can —no man needs to know it in order to be influential; the power of experienced sin is not as great as the power of innocence that has met sin and vanquished it without surrendering its innocence. It is not necessary for any man who would be a man of power to acquire intimacy with sin. But there are many sins of which we cannot be ignorant. They rise right up out of our own

hearts, they confront us in the lives of our friends. Against these sins, whether in us or in other men, the only right Christian attitude is the attitude of a hot indignation. When we think of what sin has done, when we think of the little children who are bearing its scars in their innocent bodies, and will bear them until they die, when we think of all the purity that has been wrecked by it, when we think of the treason with which sin will make truce and then stab beneath that flag, when we think of the spirit of sin which leads it to poison its enemies' wells and fight under every rule abhorrent to right men, there is nothing for men to do in their conflict with sin but to be hot against it, and to go out into the battle with that boiling spirit which was the spirit of the Lord whom the fires of His zeal consumed.

And we need this spirit of earnestness not alone in our conflict with sin; we need it also in fidelity to our principles and convictions. There is a philosophical spirit—or that is the way men dignify it—in our day that makes a man unwilling to collide with another man in the advocacy of his principles and his convictions. If he cannot get the other man to take it softly he will not try to get the other man to take it at all; and there are many men who will not stand for moral principles which involve any rigidity of attitude or interfere with other men's liberties. But there are antagonistic principles;

you cannot get them together, and the only way in which this world can move on into that great kingdom where the true and pure things prevail is by virtue of the readiness of the men who have the truth not to be afraid to let that truth come in conflict with the error and the falsehood.

After all, no movement will run that does not run on men. There is, to be sure, a power in the truth apart from its embodiment in men; but after all the only way that movements work in the world, the only way that truth accomplishes results in social order, is when the movements work and the truth accomplishes by and in and through men. It would be an easy matter to run back over the history of our own land in its politics; it would be a very easy thing to run back over the history of the Church and show that movements are just as strong as the men in them are earnest. What made the Reformation what it was was the great robust German, the unbending Genevan, the unfrightened Scot back of it. There never would have been any Reformation with Erasmus. "I was always timid," he says; "I never could bear confusion. There are times even when a man must suppress the truth. What am I, a mere worm, that I should disturb the state?" Then there rose up a great, rough German who looked out on the world with no such timid soul, who believed that when men had the truth they were

to fight for the truth, were to carry the truth against the world, and with his strong shoulders by God's grace Luther moved the current of human history. And the current ran without the deflection of weakness or fear across the cool minds and hot hearts of John Calvin and John Knox.

As we go out through life, we must go as propagandists. Christian men cannot go out with their lights hidden under a bushel; they cannot go out with the savour and the power of their salt concealed. If our faith is not true we should change it; but if it is true, we should subdue the world to it. We need not only to be earnest in our battle with sin: we must be dead in earnest also in the convictions that we hold. We believe in the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. We must refuse to compromise this truth. We must not allow the foundations to be taken out from under the Christian Church, that stands, if it stands at all, on Him; and I believe that we who believe in Him, who know that He is the only Saviour of the world, have no dispensation from Him to go out into the world and allow our Lord to be trampled under foot and His cross to be made of none effect. "Fervent in spirit" means that with heat of heart we are to hold immovably by our principles and our convictions.

Being fervent in spirit means much more—that our hearts are to be warm in fellowship.

Christian men ought to display in their brotherhood a relationship so real, so powerful, so deep, that it will not be necessary for men to set up all these fictitious brotherhoods outside the Christian Church. These organizations are a great reproach to Christ's brotherhood. They have grown up, many of them, because we have not shown the real spirit of brotherhood in the Church, because we have not shown a heat of heart in our relationship to one another. Life is broken into castes. Human fellowship is fettered by artificial conventions. In his life of Stonewall Jackson, his British biographer points out that when he went to West Point life there was hedged in, as life everywhere is hedged in, by all kinds of traditional limits of conduct. Now, Stonewall Jackson would have none of these things, and he was a strong enough man to set up his own standards against the standards of the crowd. And in much of our Christian life such crowd ideals as these prevail. We must feel in our hearts that great passion for one another of which Peter speaks, "That seeing our hearts have been purified by obedience to the truth unto the unfeigned love of the brethren, we should love one another from a pure heart fervently." How infrequent a thing it is for a man to say to a man, "My friend, I love you." We shut all that down deep in our hearts and allow no such confessions to emerge. And this is a small thing. Do we feel and prove

the love? Where is the real commanding human brotherhood, though unexpressed in words? I do not wonder that men who want the fellowship of hearts set up all kinds of brotherhoods outside of our Lord Jesus Christ. They are seeking what Christianity was meant to give them. Surely we ought to go out to illustrate in the world the reality of the great fervent brotherhood of Christian men.

And, once more, we need this earnest spirit in our service of God and man. Consider for a moment the example of our Lord Jesus Christ in this. His brethren came once to Him assured that the man had gone mad. He took no leisure so much as to eat. He had made it so fully His meat and drink to do His Father's will that He actually neglected the meat and drink of which His body stood in need. And you remember the great words into which He condensed the whole spirit of His life: "We must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day, for the night is coming when no man can work."

When we turn from His life to the life of St. Paul we find another hot-hearted life, the kind of man who, when he was a Jew, was a Jew to the full, and when he became a Christian was likewise to the full a Christian man, and who at last rejoiced when he was counted worthy to lay down his life for Christ. We are reminded in connection with him of the fine words of Thomas Fuller of Cromwell's time: "The

good soldier grudgeth not to get a probability of victory by the certainty of his own death, and fleeth from nothing so much as from the mention of fleeing; and though the world call him a madman, our soldier knoweth that he shall receive the reward of his valour with God in Heaven, and making the world his executor leave it to the rich inheritance of his memory." The men who have been good soldiers of Jesus Christ have gone forth in His service with such a heart. They have not been lukewarm men; they have not been men who gave Christ part of their hearts and held back the rest; they have been men who have gone after Him into service with all the heat of devoted lives, who have served Him with the single-mindedness with which John Brown, for example, served what he conceived to be his cause. Now you may call John Brown a crazy man if you please. Governor Wise of Virginia did not think he was. Somebody spoke in that way once about John Brown in Governor Wise's hearing, and he replied: "They are mistaken who take Brown to be a madman. He is a bundle of the best nerves I ever saw; cut and thrust and bleeding, and in bonds. He is a man of clear head, of courage, fortitude, and simple ingenuousness. He is cool, collected, and indomitable, and it is but just to him to say that he was humane to his prisoners, and he inspired me with great trust in his integrity as a man of truth. He is a

fanatic, vain and garrulous, but firm, truthful, and intelligent. He professes to be a Christian, in communion with the Congregational Church of the North, and openly preaches his purpose of universal emancipation; and the negroes themselves were to be the agents, by means of arms, led on by white commanders. . . . Colonel Washington says that he was the coolest and firmest man he ever saw in defying danger and death. With one son dead by his side, and another shot through, he felt the pulse of his son with one hand, held his rifle with the other, and commanded his men with the utmost composure, encouraging them to be firm, and to sell their lives as dearly as they could."

Mr. Sanborn, his biographer, relates that one day in Charleston Jail a minister came to call on him and defended slavery as a Christian institution. "My dear sir," said the old man, "you know nothing about Christianity. You will have to learn its *a b c*. I find you quite ignorant of what the word Christianity means." And when the man looked at him, very much disconcerted, John Brown softened a little: "I respect you as a gentleman, of course, but it is as a *heathen* gentleman." And it was exactly that intensity of feeling in the old man that made him willing for the sake of his cause to lay down his life, and the heat of his passion set this land on fire.

Christian men are to serve Christ and men

with no less sacrificial devotion. General Armstrong was this type of Christ's servant. General Marshall says of him and his attitude to difficulties: "For most people an obstacle is something in the way to stop going on, but for General Armstrong it merely meant something to climb over, and if he could not climb all the way over he would get up as high as possible, and then crow." As he said himself, "I have had a taste of blood, i. e., I have had the taste of life and work—cannot live without the arena. I must be in it. . . . Despair shakes his skinny hand and glares his hideous eyes on me to little purpose. I feel happy when all my powers of resistance are taxed." He believed that all men were called on to wage a great war for God, and that in their warfare for God they were meant to work and fight in an even intenser spirit than that in which they would work and fight for their native land. You remember Chinese Gordon's experience with Li Hung Chang. Now, Chinese Gordon was a man of peace. He did not usually carry a weapon, but he went and hunted once for the life of Li Hung Chang. Li Hung Chang had lied to him. He had promised to save the lives of the Taiping princes taken in the city of Soo Chow, and then he had them executed, and once in his life Chinese Gordon's temper got beyond his control. He took a revolver and went on a hunt for Li Hung Chang, and if he had ever

found him Li Hung Chang's subsequent career would never have been fulfilled. I imagine that Gordon was glad afterwards that he did not find him, but I imagine that he was glad also to the last day that he went and looked for him, that he had in his heart the spirit that made him desire to resent a great crime and wrong, that put him in his "sparring mood," as one of the gentlest of our women missionaries put it just a little while ago—that put him in his "sparring mood" against all evil and sin. Are we ever in a "sparring mood," or are we living hand in glove with all sorts of tepidity and weakness, and in surrender to sin and quietness and indolence and spiritual torpor and cowardice? Is that our spirit, or have we hearts hot to do in the world the work of God? It is all put for us in one of Dr. Bonar's hymns:

"Time worketh. Let me work too.
Time undoeth. Let me do.
As busy as time my work I ply
Till I rest in the rest of eternity.

"Sin worketh. Let me work too.
Sin undoeth. Let me do.
As busy as sin my work I ply
Till I rest in the rest of eternity.

"Death worketh. Let me work too.
Death undoeth. Let me do.
As busy as death my work I ply
Till I rest in the rest of eternity."

And now, lastly, not alone do we need to have hearts hot for battle with sin, hot in fidelity to our great principles and convictions, warm in their love for the men who with us love our Brother, the Lord Jesus Christ, and for those who ought to love Him, warm in their devotion to their duty in the world, but they must be warm also in their personal love and loyalty to the Master of Hearts, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Whatever of life and power we have ever received, we have received because of our living contact with Him. It has not come to us because of any preaching of high ethical doctrine; it has not come to us because of any general atmosphere, save as that itself is the product of our Lord's personal power. Whatever has come to us of heavenly good has come from our divine Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Life and the Light of men; and if we are going to keep it as we go on our way we shall only keep it because we walk in a warm and earnest fellowship with Him. And that fellowship involves a real life of prayer, a life of prayer intensely real. There is no more Scriptural adjective to use about it than just this adjective, "earnest." There are two places in the New Testament where this word is used with reference to prayer: once in Luke's account of our Lord's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, "And He prayed yet more earnestly, and the sweat stood out on His brow as it were great

drops of blood." Now, if you will look in your Greek Testament you will find that the word that is translated here "earnestly" is a word that a Greek might have used in describing a race between men or horses, when at the very last, when the two men come down breast and breast, or the two horses neck and neck, one leans forward with just an extra strain, and by that strain prevails. Luke's idea is that our Lord prayed strainingly, and how strainingly He prayed we may judge from the fact that His sweat was red blood. The other place where the word occurs is in the last chapter of the Epistle of James, where we are told that Elijah prayed earnestly. Now the Greek word is not the same there. If you will turn to your Greek Testament you will find that it says He prayed "in prayer." That is, He did not describe God in prayer; He did not issue a moral exhortation in prayer; he did not do anything in prayer but pray; He prayed in prayer, and the English translators have correctly said He prayed earnestly. Can we apply such terms of description to our prayers? Are we earnest in them? Do our prayers reach down and grip the bottom cords of our hearts?

And do our hearts burn within us toward Christ? In southern China, some years ago, in a city on the borders of the province of Hunan, I talked with a young Chinese Christian man. He was a graduate of a college in the

far north. He had come a thousand miles away from home to preach Christ among his own countrymen. He was one of the most intelligent Chinese Christians whom I had met. And I was asking him many questions regarding his nation, and especially regarding the life and spirit of the Chinese Christians. And when I was through he said, "Mr. Speer, you have asked me a great many questions, and some of them have been very difficult. You have asked about the Christians in China. Now, I would like to ask you one question. You know what the Christians in your country are like. Are they all men and women of burning hearts?" It was a quaint Chinese idiom of which he made use, but that was its literal translation. He desired to know if we were all of us of burning hearts. What would you have said to him? What would you have said to him about yourself? What would you have said to him about the great mass of our so-called Christians? Are we of burning hearts? Have any of our hearts burned within us as did the hearts of the two who walked with the Saviour that evening long ago? Have our hearts ever burned within us while He talked with us by the way? Are our hearts now aglow in a great and tender love for Jesus Christ? Oh, whatever else our hearts may be cool about, let them at least be warm toward Him who loved us and gave Himself for us and whom having not seen we ought to

love. Are we sure, as we look at our hearts now, that we are in the right relationships regarding our lives? Perhaps some of us have put off to this moment great decisions which we know we ought to make, and our wills are trembling in the balance now; a feather's weight of influence would carry them over. And I suppose some of us—who have heard Christ asking us for our lives, for our wills, for our hearts—will refuse and instead of handing them over to Him will go on retaining them in our own control. There are many who have seen the great vision of a service of the world who are still going on their way without yielding up their lives to its glory. "Though you and I are very little beings," said Samuel J. Mills a hundred years ago, "we must not rest satisfied till we have made our influence extend to the remotest corner of this ruined world." The temperature of our hearts toward Christ will determine the issues of our decision.

"'Tis not for man to trifle, life is brief
And sin is here;
Our age is but the falling of a leaf,
A dropping tear.
We have no time to sport away the hours,
All must be earnest in a world like ours.

"Not many lives, but only one have we,
One, only one,
How earnest should that one life be,
That narrow span.

Day after day spent in blessed toil,
Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil."

Until at the last, the work of the day done, the battle over and the long shadows of the evening falling across the land, we make our way home. What will our greeting be from Him who is waiting for us by the setting of the sun?

XI

THE MASTER, THE SATISFACTION OF THE HEART

"I AM the way, the truth, and the life." These words were spoken by our Saviour in answer to the second of the four interruptions which He suffered from His disciples in the upper room on the night on which He was betrayed. He had been speaking to them of the characteristic of the new Christian society, as a body of men whose love for one another marked them as Christ's. Simon Peter, intent, as most of us are, on future destiny rather than on present duty, caught up some remarks of Jesus about His intention to go away, and passing by altogether His command to love, the most significant thing that He had said, asked Him whither He was going. Our Lord answered Simon's inquiry, and left him dumbfounded with what He told him of his own heart. I do not wonder that the body of disciples was thrown into consternation by this remark of Christ's. They had heard Him say a little while before that one of them was to betray Him; they had heard Him say now of the leader of their company that that very night he would deny Christ before the cock had crowed. What

confidence could there be in man any more? Looking out upon their troubled faces, Jesus said: "Let not your hearts be troubled. You have lost all confidence in one another, you have no confidence in yourselves, but you believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go, I will come again, and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know the way." Then Thomas broke in, here as always, as Marcus Dods says, "the mouthpiece of the despondency of the twelve." "Lord," he says, "we know not whither Thou art going; how can we know the way?" It may have been reprehensible in Thomas to have doubted so much and to have had such a chronic disposition of despair, but it was not reprehensible in him to carry his doubts and his despondencies to Jesus. Think what we should have lost if he had not spoken out the frank, blunt feelings of his heart to the Saviour. If he had not told the Lord this night in the upper room that he did not know where He was going, and, therefore, could not know the way, we might not have had this priceless saying of Jesus, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Let us think, for a moment, of this declaration as a whole, of the bold comprehensive claims of it. A man can at the most show to others the

way, says Gess; he cannot claim himself to be either the way, the truth, or the life. Jesus is uttering here another of those great declarations that separate Him from all men and all other teachers of religion. "I am the bread of life." "I am the light of the world." "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." "I am come, not to condemn the world, but to save the world." "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Now, Jesus does not say, as other masters, "I show you the way, and the truth, and the life." He came, as has often been said, not to proclaim a message, but that there might be a message to proclaim. Jesus Christ did not only preach the gospel; He was the gospel. In this thing Jesus sets His religion off against all other religions. Buddhism, as has often been pointed out, is the religion of a method; Mohammedanism is the religion of a book; Christianity is the religion of a person. It is Jesus. Whosoever enters it, enters Him; whosoever would learn its lessons, learns Him; whosoever would feed upon its nourishment eats His body and drinks His blood. "I am," said Jesus, "the way, and the truth, and the life."

Now we cannot, at the very outset, over-emphasise the significance of Jesus Christ's having declared that He was Christianity. In some of our colleges we organise ourselves into Christian bodies on the basis of some common spiritual

sympathies; all the people who have any admiring regard for religion are affiliated on one common basis and in one common organisation. Our religion degenerates into a common ethical sympathy, into the adoption of a few indefinite religious principles, and has divorced itself from a person, from loyalty to the supreme and unique claims of Jesus Christ Himself. Now Christianity was Christ to Paul. I cannot conceive of Paul's being able to understand any kind of Christianity that was not Christ, that did not root itself in Christ, that did not lead on to Christ, that did not guard as with anxious jealousy the deity and the uniqueness of Christ. And the hymns of Christendom find all of Christianity also in Him.

"Oh, Thou art all to me!
Nothing to please I see,
Nothing apart from Thee,
Jesus, my Lord!"

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
All I need in Thee I find."

It was this sense of the indissoluble relationship between the Christian faith and Christ Himself that led Robertson of Brighton, for example, to say, as he talked to working men in the town hall of Brighton regarding infidel publications, "I refuse to permit discussion respecting the love which a Christian man bears to his Re-

deemer, a love more delicate far than the love which was ever borne to sister or the adoration with which he regards his God, a reverence more sacred than ever man bore to mother." When Jesus, standing in the midst of His disciples, told them that He was everything, He made it impossible for all time for any disciple of His ever to compromise His claims or ever to surrender one whit of that which Jesus Christ alone is, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Let us think a little while on these things that Jesus Christ said He was. "I am the way," He says. What way? He goes on in this same verse to indicate what way He means, for "no man," He says, "cometh to the Father but by Me. I am He who opens to men the way to the Father and the Father's heart." Now apart from Jesus Christ human history is one thing; with Jesus Christ human history is a different thing. Omit the incarnation and human history reads in the terms of man's search after God, and His only answer is silence on the Father's lips, whatever is in the Father's heart; with Jesus Christ human history reads in the terms of God's search after man, with pathetic pleas upon the Father's lips and pathetic love in the Father's heart. "I am," says Jesus, "the way home for men to the heart of the Father."

Now, as Augustine says, men must find that way, because we were made for God and we can never rest until at last we find our resting place

in Him. And all human history, the whole tale of the best experience of men, is but the confession of their longing after the way home to the Father's heart. Those of you who have read the "Life and Letters of Romanes" will recall the picture there of the discontent, the utter restlessness of heart of the man who had once rested on the Father's arms and who had experienced the vision of the Father's face, and who has gone out but must come back again to the Father's love. Many a man and many a woman feels a hunger that will not be appeased until at last it feeds itself upon the Son of God who is the true bread come down out of heaven. The knowledge of God, which Jesus Christ intends to give us through Himself as the way, is the goal of all our irrepressible human longing.

You remember the character of Calista in one of Cardinal Newman's finest tales, the story that contains the wonderful picture of the locust plague in northern Africa, and her cry, "Oh, that I could find Him! On the right hand and on the left I grope and touch Him not. Why dost Thou fight against me, O First and only Fair?" And you remember the same longing expressed in one of Mr. Matthew Arnold's essays, in which he quotes—Mr. Hutton says he could not have been the first to use them—the words of Israel: "Thou, O Eternal, are the thing that I long for. Thou art my hope, even from my youth." And you remem-

ber the passionate expressions of this longing in the Psalms: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee; my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is." And nothing appeals to us quite so much, I think, as we read the lives of good men as those great experiences in which they have entered at last into the fulness of the consciousness of God. Is there one of us whose heart does not hunger for such a satisfaction in God as this? How shall we find this longed-for way to Him? I, says Jesus, am the way. In Christ we find it, home.

"It shall be
A face like My face that receives thee;
A man like to Me
Thou shalt love and be loved by forever;
A hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee.
See the Christ stand."

When our hearts long for the way, Jesus Christ stands before us saying to us, "I am the Way, the Way home for the lost child, the Way that ties the two worlds together, the Way from the seen into the unseen, the Way from the present into the everlasting, the Way out of our restlessness into the perfect rest of God, the Way that can never weary or grow old." I

like the phrase in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "a new and living way," a way that we can never tire of, a way in which each of us shall be finding in Jesus Christ every day some new and fresh discovery of love and be resting ourselves in His inexhaustibleness Who said, "I am the way."

The early Church made a noble use of this word, and it became a synonym of Christianity, so that Luke tells us when Paul set out from Jerusalem to Damascus, with letters hunting for Christians, it was that he might find any who were of "this Way," and bring them bound to Jerusalem. We read that in the city of Ephesus no small stir was aroused regarding "the Way"; of Felix, that he was better acquainted than others with "this Way," and we hear Paul himself saying, that in those old days "I myself persecuted those who were of the Way unto death." Christianity is not a terminus: it is a progress. Jesus Christ Himself is not an attainable end; He is a route; He Himself is fathomless and inexhaustible, and when once we have set our feet in His way, He leads us on and on forever to larger and richer things every day, and to an end that never is to be found. "I," says He, "am the way."

"I am the truth," says Christ; "the gathering up into one of all that is eternal and absolute in this changing world. Primarily I am the truth about God, and the way to Him, but, more

than that, I am all the truth that men need know to live by in this mortal life of theirs." Mark once again the calm assurance of Jesus; He speaks as though all the problems of life were perfectly clear and simple to Him. I heard a very suggestive paper a little while ago read before a large gathering of Christian men, in which the writer took the ground that we must shift the whole line of Christian work and teaching, that old problems that a generation ago you could take for granted as settled are now regarded as open problems, such, he said, as, Is there a God? or Is there an immortal life? Perhaps there was more or less truth in this view; at any rate, we are ever perplexing ourselves over many questions that seemed to Jesus to have been just as clear as the sunlight, never to have been confused in his mind by a solitary doubt! "I am the truth," He says. Men debate as to whether there is any truth, or as to whether, if there is truth, we can ever know we have found it, while Jesus stands before us all the time telling us that He Himself is the truth.

He is the truth about man. He tells us what man is, and what man may be. We measure ourselves over against Him, and for the first time we realise ourselves. We hold ourselves aloof from Him, and our ideals seem glorious, and our attainment passable, and our sins venial. We measure ourselves against Christ, and we abhor ourselves in dust and ashes. We stand

up face to face with Him who is the truth about man, and for the first time we understand what we are; all the misery and the flaw of our lives, all the shame and the loathsomeness of our shortcomings. And we look up into His face once again, and we see there not alone what we are, but what we may be. We hear Him speaking of Himself as the Son of Man; we hear Him telling us that the Father sent Him to show what in the Father's mind we are, and that we may hide ourselves in Him. Jesus Christ is to us the truth about ourselves as we are and as we may be.

He is to us the truth about God. Men complain, a large and growing class of men, of our anthropomorphic statements about God. Can we think of Him otherwise? We know ourselves only and have none but anthropomorphic metaphors in which to speak of personality or being. And Jesus Christ comes to us as a man to make God plain to us and vindicate once and forever our human ways of speaking about God. As good Pascal said years ago: "Not only do we know God by Jesus Christ alone, but we know ourselves by Jesus Christ alone. Apart from Jesus Christ we know not what is our life, nor our death, nor God, nor ourselves." We are lost in our thought even until we stand before Him Who, in that upper room before His confused disciples, said, "I am the way; I am the truth."

Notice, once again, He does not say that He teaches the truth. We speak about "Christ and other masters," about Jesus as a teacher of truth. Jesus Christ is Himself the truth. As Thomas Erskine, with all his peculiar views, wrote to Lady Elgin, "I believe all notions of religion, howsoever true, to be absolutely worthless. Christ is far above all doctrines about Him, however true. Christ is the truth. A doctrine that can be separated from Himself is a vanity and a deception." And those of us who think that we can cultivate the religious life while we stultify Christ's claims, those of us who think that we can cherish the sympathies of Jesus while we deny the character of Jesus, are simply forgetting that Jesus Christ is not the teacher of a separable truth, that Jesus Christ Himself is a personal, and living, and incarnate truth. To be sure He did come to reveal truth to men. In the case even of any of us who are not Christians, all our ideas of God are borrowed from Christ, all our true ideas of human nature are borrowed from Christ, all our worthy standards and conceptions of life are borrowed from Christ. Even to those who have not taken Jesus Christ as Himself the truth, Jesus is the teacher of truth. What He said that day in answer to Pilate's taunt, "Art Thou a king, then?" "Thou sayest that I am a king. For this purpose I was born, and for this purpose came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth, and he

that is of the truth hears My voice," is true still. Jesus Christ has come to teach men truth, and if honest men and women in Christian lands would strip out of their life and thought the truth that they owe to Jesus Christ, they would see instantly how poor and inadequate the life and the thought that are left to them are, and how utterly and absolutely they stand alone in the truth that Jesus Christ is. "The word became flesh," says John, "and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." O perplexed heart, that questions sometimes as to where truth is and knows not where its foundations are to be found, that, perhaps, many times has sympathised with poor James Thomson's wail about

"The sense that every struggle brings defeat,
Because fate holds no prize to crown success;
That all the oracles are dumb or cheat
Because they have no secret to express.
And none can pierce the great dark veil uncertain,
Because there is no light beyond the curtain,
But all is vanity and nothingness,"

remember that One has come out from behind that curtain, Himself full of grace and truth, to say to men perplexed and women distressed, "I am the way; I am the truth."

"I am the life," added Christ, "the way, the truth, and the life." The death which cast its shadow over the eleven and over Himself should itself be swallowed up in life. Standing there beneath the shadow of His cross, before the

open grave over which the stone was to be rolled to hide His burial, Jesus Christ, the frailest life in the world, declared to men, "I am the life." All the longing of our day is answered by this assertion of Christ's. The term "life" has become the catch-word of our time. Once and again men speak about it who have no notion whatever of what Jesus Christ meant by life, who simply mean by life some expansion of tastes, some enlargement of one's range of vision, some greater reach of sympathies, life that is to end when conscious being ends, which will be when the body lies down and dies. There are scarcely any lines more quoted than the lines of Tennyson's, in which he gives voice to this longing of our day:

> "'Tis life wherever our nerves are scant;
> Oh, life, not death, for which we pant,
> More life and fuller that we want."

Life is the great word. Not love or truth or duty, but life. The new theologies build around it. The poets and the poetesses sing of it, though they do not mean what Christ meant. We cannot suppress, if we would, dissatisfaction with contraction, with narrowness. We hunger for perfect energy, for perfect liberty to use that energy, for boundless scope of life, for endless development. The way a little child shrinks from being shut up in the dark is only the indication of the way all our life covets liberty and

freedom. It struggles frantically against that sense of contraction, of narrowness, of limitation, of death which comes to it in confinement in the gloom. Our souls rise up in revolt against the sense of termination, against the feeling of narrowness, against anything that shuts them out from perfect liberty of destiny. What Tennyson writes about wages is the cry of the soul of each of us:

"Glory of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,
Paid by a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea;
Glory of virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong.
Nay, but she aimed not at glory—no lover of glory she:
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be.

"The wages of sin is death; if the wages of virtue be dust,
Would she have had heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly?
She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky:
Give her the glory of going on, and not to die."

Our souls rise up in war against the thought of ending, and as they struggle with their limitations and their chains, the great Deliverer comes, as He stood that night before the little

group shocked with the sorrow of His departure, and says to us, "I am the life." All that longing for life which even the narrowest and smallest human soul can never suppress, Jesus Christ promises to complete and to fulfil. He Himself is ready to link us to that supernatural connection which means life divine. There is no physical difference visible in the life that has accepted Christ and the life which has rejected Him, or that has not yet taken Him in His fulness, but the eye of God sees a difference as great between noonday and midnight. The soul that has accepted Jesus Christ is tied to God, the living God, with ties that cannot be broken, with all the channels of intercourse open in the fulness of their wealth and treasure between it and God, the living God. "I am the life," says Jesus Christ, "the resurrection and the life; so that he that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live again; and he that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

What an unsatisfied, discontented lot ours would be if there were no such voice as this speaking in our ears, out of the ineffable life, a message of real life to our dead souls, "I am the life." How weary, and wretched, I say, it would be if what Mr. Arnold has written in "Obermann Once More" were true:

> "That gracious child, that thorn-crowned man,
> He lived while we believed,

"While we believed on earth He went
And open stood His grave.
Men called from chamber, church and tent,
And Christ was by to save.

"Now He is dead; far hence He lies,
In the lone Syrian town,
And on His grave with shining eyes
The Syrian stars look down."

"I am the wilderness, and falsehood, and death," Jesus said? Oh, no! "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." The way home to the Father's heart, the truth for your perplexed souls to find, the life to satisfy you utterly; "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Oh, my friends, will we not let Jesus Christ be Himself to us? Why will we insist on taking only a fraction of His gifts, while he offers us in Himself a satisfying way, a satisfying truth, a satisfying life? Shall we not answer rather à Kempis's appeal in the third book of his "Imitation"?—

"My son, the more thou canst go out of thyself, so much the more wilt thou be able to enter into Me.

"As to desire no outward thing produceth inward peace, so the forsaking of ourselves inwardly joineth us unto God.

"I will have thee learn perfect resignation of thyself to My will, without contradiction or complaint.

"Follow thou Me. I AM the way, the truth, and the life. Without the way there is no going; without the truth there is no knowing; without the life there is no living. I am the way, which thou oughtest to follow; the truth, which thou oughtest to trust; the life, which thou oughtest to hope for.

"I AM the way inviolable, the truth infallible, the life that cannot end.

"I AM the straightest way, the highest truth, the true life, the blessed life, the life uncreated.

"If thou remain in My way, thou shalt know the truth, and the truth shall make thee free, and thou shalt lay hold on eternal life."

XII

THE UNIQUENESS OF OUR LORD AND MASTER JESUS CHRIST

IT is a very significant fact that in our thoughts about men we are unable to come to the life of Christ without an altered feeling. This is true even if we have been thinking of religious men, of men to whom we owe some debt of the deepest character, toward whom our temper is naturally reverent. As we pass one after another of these men before our eyes, and our gaze at last falls on Christ, no matter how loving our thoughts may have been, they are touched with a new tenderness and our reverence deepens into awe. And this is equally true if we turn from the thought of men as religious leaders and think of them just as men who have swayed the minds and wills of their fellow men. We cannot think about Jesus Christ in any such list of men with the same feeling with which we think of others. There is not one other great leader about whom we cannot speak humorously or jocosely if we wish, or with a little pleasantry, but we cannot speak in that way about our Lord. When we come to Him

it is as though a still voice whispered in our ears, Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

But someone may say: "We have simply grown up in a Christian atmosphere, speaking a language that is infiltrated with Christian ideas and terms. What we have inherited from those who went before us makes it impossible for us to speak lightly of One Who was so dear to them, however our thoughts differ from their thoughts about Him." But it is true even of men who have shaken themselves free from the influence of education and association that they feel this same spell when they come to think and to speak of Jesus Christ. Mr. John Morley surely has done, as far as any man can, the work of separating himself from the external influences of the atmosphere in which he lives so far as thoughts about Jesus Christ are concerned, and in his essay on the book entitled "Supernatural Religion" he says he might say some things derogatory of Jesus if he wished, but that he will not say them. If they are true things, why does he not say them? If there are some things that he knows about Jesus that other people do not believe to be true about Jesus, why should he not say them so that other people may have their opinions about Jesus corrected? And it is said that when Renan published the popular edition of his great work on Jesus he deliberately omitted from it those pas-

sages which had been most unkind and unsympathetic in their reference to Christ, because he said it was not necessary to tell those true things to the people. Why did they deal with Jesus in this way? If it had been Napoleon or Julius Cæsar, Mr. Morley and Renan would not have felt so, but they did feel so about Jesus Christ. It is very strange.

And the strangeness of it is accentuated when we stop to reflect upon the scantiness of what we know about Jesus. Here was a short life of thirty-three years, and of the first twelve years of it we know only one or two or three incidents. The next eighteen years are an utter blank, and of the last three years of it the doings and the sayings of a few days only are chronicled. We think sometimes that the Gospels tell us what Jesus did every day, but if you enumerate all the different days of Christ's life with which the Gospels deal you will find that they show us Christ in a very small portion of His public life. How small is the volume of what has been told us about Jesus! You can read it all through in one afternoon, and yet there is not one of us who would undertake, short of many days, to explain the significance of Christ's life. Men would venture to give in fifteen or twenty minutes the important lessons of Napoleon's life, or of the life of Julius Cæsar, about both of whom we know much more in volume of material than we do about Jesus, but

none of us would attempt that in the life of Christ.

Our feeling about Christ becomes more significant still if we turn from thinking of the scantiness of the records of our Lord's life to think of the insignificance and obscurity of that life itself. What did the great world in which He lived care for Him? What did it know about Him? Away off in a remote and despised province of the Roman empire, He lived and died, making a little disturbance locally, the news of which I suppose never reached the ears of anyone who cared for it at all in Rome. What a simple unknown life it was, a peasant lad, a tradesman, uneducated according to the factitious standards of His day, going about for a few years saying words to the people, gathering a little company of friends about Him and influencing them, doing kind and loving things, and then dying on a cross between two thieves. That was all, and yet you and I cannot think of it without trembling lips and a thrill in our hearts.

Why should it be that in this way Jesus is singled out from all other persons who have ever walked about on this earth? I think one chief reason is found in the claims that He made for Himself and that were made for Him. Take His own simple declarations about Himself: "I am the good shepherd," "I am the door of the sheep," "I am the true vine," "I am the light of the world," "I am the bread of life," and "The

bread which I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Of course it is possible to say that these are only bold oriental metaphors, and that they seem to imply more than they actually contained in the thought of Jesus, but you can turn to other things that Jesus said and find that these metaphors not only did not contain more than the truth, but barely hint at truth which on every side overflows them and which the metaphors cannot contain. What did He say about His relations to the Father? "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father, which dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." More than that: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." And more than that: "I and the Father are one," "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

But there are many who say that all these declarations of Jesus and these claims that He makes are contained in one Gospel, and that that Gospel's authorship is disputed, and that the accuracy of its representations of Christ's words is very questionable. Fall back on the Sermon on the Mount, if you wish. The people who throw out the Gospel of John, who discredit the claims of Christ, who try to pare down what is said about Jesus's deity by the evangelists, exalt the Sermon on the Mount. But the Sermon on the Mount makes its own claims for Jesus Christ. The very note of authority in the

beatitudes is a divine claim. Who is this young man Who stands up saying who the persons are to whom the kingdom of God shall belong? Who is this man from Galilee Who dares to declare by whom the whole earth is to be possessed, Who sets on one side all the teachers of the Jewish nation, and stands Himself on the other side, and says, "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time so and so, but I say unto you," and Who declares that at the last day of all not every man that says to Him, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but the man who has done His Father's will? "In that day *I* will say unto you, Depart from Me; *I* never knew you!" And Jesus closes the sermon with a declaration as to whose are the stable lives and whose the unstable: "He that heareth My words and doeth them not, is like the man that built his house upon the sand." Jesus Christ said marvellous things about Himself.

But is it not even more marvellous that, having said them, people think Him modest? If one were forced to lay his finger on one single characteristic of Christ that is universally acknowledged, and that is an unconscious confession of His Divinity by every one who acknowledges this characteristic in Him, it is His humility. For Jesus Christ was the most boastful, the most arrogant person who ever lived if He was not Divine. "I am the way, the

truth, and the life." "I and the Father are one." "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." What modesty or humility can be found in those words if they are not true? Grant that Jesus Christ was what He claimed to be, and He is the humblest and most lowly-minded person who ever walked about among men. But, if Jesus was not what He claimed to be, how does it come that the whole heart of man turns to Him and believes that He spoke the truth when He said, "I am meek and lowly in heart"?

I am not speaking, now, with any special purpose to convince any who may not be persuaded of our Lord's deity. He rises up before our lives, and we know that what He has done there none but God could do. He stands out before our hearts, and what He is to us we know that none but God could be. But I would speak of some things in Jesus that were most divinely human in Him, and which, one might almost say, those people who believe least in His deity are under chiefest obligation to repeat in themselves. For that is the difficulty in which many of those who do not regard Jesus Christ as the strong Son of God involve themselves. If Jesus Christ was what He was just as a man, then these are the very people who are under chiefest obligation to repeat those qualities in Jesus which they allege it is possible for a mere man to display. Those of us who regard Jesus Christ as God

can believe that there were some things in Him difficult for us to attain.

Think for a moment, first of all, of Christ's sincere directness of character. There are sinuous people, furtive, indirect, disingenuously reticent, whose life does not ring genuinely true, who speak to you with an averted eye, who do not carry with them the tone of a robust sincere integrity of life. Jesus was not that kind. There was a large ingenuous candour about Him, a direct sincerity and reality in His life that made Jesus Himself the standard of truth in character in the little band of disciples in whose midst He stood and in human life since down to this day.

We see the sincere directness of Jesus in His methods of work. He was no manipulator. He dealt not with institutions, but with life. His disciples were pressing Him constantly to become an institutionalist. They pointed out to Him the risk He was running of leaving His kingdom disorganised. They wanted Him to appoint the places, to assign positions of authority, but Jesus steadfastly refused to do so, and died without ever having accomplished what His disciples desired. He had comparatively little interest in institutions as such; He built on the life that is back of institutions. He was dealing not with outer laws, but with inner principles of life. His word constantly was not, Thou shalt do, but, Thou shalt be. He does not say,

"Do the perfect things, as your heavenly Father does them," but "Be ye perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Of course, from one point of view Christ was compelled to do this. Many people appeal to Christ's example in His attitude toward government as justifying Christian men and women in holding aloof from political duty. They quote His words, "My kingdom is not of the world," and they point out also how He held Himself free from any political relationships. He had none, for one thing, but the reason why He taught that His kingdom was not of this world was that the only kingdom that will ever prevail over this world is a kingdom that is not of it. Jesus would have ended His ministry before He did and would have failed in it before He ended it if He had not pursued the principles that He did pursue. He stood before the institution of human slavery, and never mentioned it once in all His teaching, or spoke one word of loathing or hatred of it. He simply taught that men were all children of one God and that justice was to prevail among men. He said to His disciples when He gathered them together on the last night of all, "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." And that was the doom of human slavery. He stood before half of the human race shut out of its rights. He never said one word about woman's equality with man, but He never said one thing

that did not imply it. Pick out any ten or a dozen of Christ's commands, and they are not masculine commands; they apply equally to men and women alike. And when He exalted those qualities which are the qualities of the woman's heart, when He said to men, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest, for I am meek and lowly in heart," Jesus Christ made women free.

We can see Christ's luminous honesty and directness in His teaching. I once heard a lawyer in Pennsylvania, who was one of the most successful lawyers in the state, speaking of how the truth shone round him often as he stood before a jury. "Sometimes," he said, "I can see it flashing, like the lightning in the sky, around my mind, or it blazes out like the very fierceness of the noon, and I am in agony and fear lest I cannot put it into words which will convey it to the minds of other men." There are men who cannot perceive truth, and there are other men who cannot express it after they have perceived it. The sincere directness of our Lord's character displayed itself in the way He spoke as never man spake, and said things that the little children could understand, that old people who are ignorant can rest their dear heads upon and comprehend.

Are we like Christ in His sincere directness of character? How much of deceptiveness there is in us, how much of white falsehood in

our social conversation, how much of evil tinging our judgments of one another and making wrong imaginations in the chambers of our heart! How much we need to be changed to be like our Lord Jesus Christ in the sincere purity of His character and of His life!

Think once again of the calm confidence of Jesus. We see it in His pursuit of this method of which I have been speaking. Now this is the hardest method in the world to pursue. I venture to say that no Christian leader has ever arisen without facing the same temptation that the disciples forced upon Jesus, the temptation to create a sect, to erect a party, to build up a machine. It is one of the temptations that confront every Christian man, to strive to do that, rather than just to let the grains fall into the ground and die and trust the Lord of the harvest to bring the harvest in His own good time. The divine faith of Jesus Christ is seen in nothing else more clearly than in His readiness to pursue this plan of recklessness of result in His public work and life.

I bid you think of the significance of this spirit of confidence in Jesus. Who was He? A man with no influence behind Him, a man commanding no wealth, a man possessing none of the qualities that were supposed to be essential to leadership in His day. This man was confident. Think of what it was He was confident about. He proposed a project that was universal when

the world was barely known, a small fraction of it known to His contemporaries, a great section of it absolutely unknown to them, a project not alone to absorb the whole world, but to run through endless ages of time. No mere man sits down before a perpetual project; no man proposes a universal dominion. A man from Galilee, out of which arises no prophet, proposes to establish a universal and an eternal kingdom!

And mark the confident spirit of Christ as He sets about His work. There are no moods or despondencies in it. We speak of the Transfiguration and the agony of Gethsemane as moods. These are not moods. They are triumphs, conflicts, epochs of struggle and victory, but not moods either of exaltation or despondency. Consider the life, beset on every side, pressed down, not one single soul to understand or sympathise with it, crushed within limitations against which it wrestled beyond the possibility of any one of us to understand, and yet walking with quiet, calm evenness of will and heart through it all, with never one moment's hesitation as to the certainty of final and complete victory, speaking quietly of His Gospel as to be preached everywhere, of all nations to be made His disciples, of the tale of a woman's love to be told wherever throughout the whole world the knowledge of Him and of His salvation should go. Think of the confidence, the calm steadfast rest of Jesus Christ, who never doubted either His project

or Himself. We know men who never doubt themselves, but sometimes doubt their projects; and other men who never doubt their projects, but often doubt themselves. But here was One Who doubted neither His mission nor Himself. We very greatly need to be like our Lord Jesus Christ in this. When we have a sense of having failed utterly, when we look back over our life and it seems only havoc and shipwreck, He can help us also to rest with perfect confidence in Him Whose will we have come to do.

Think, thirdly, of the unselfishness of Jesus. I am not speaking of the unselfishness of the incarnation, though that grows ever more marvellous and incomprehensible. I do not see how any reverent man or woman can grow old in human sorrow and experience without standing each day with fresh wonder before the miracle and the marvel of the incarnation. We speak about the agony of Christ's death. It was deliverance to Him. The agony of Christ's life here on earth was not in the end of it, but in the continued endurance of it while He lived, hedged in with the standards of our moral life with all the fresh high judgments of heaven in Him. In Browning's Karshish is the story of Lazarus come back from the grave to live still among people who are bound to this present world while Lazarus, perforce, must move about among them carrying always in his heart

heaven's standards and visions. Our Lord Jesus had to do that all the time He was here, and the unselfishness of it passes all understanding. When with that infinite stoop of condescension our Lord emptied Himself, buried Himself in a grave that was many times more real a grave to Him than Joseph's clean and new-made tomb, even the grave of our human flesh, and went about amongst us imprisoned in this charnel house of our humanity, there was the real object lesson of unselfishness.

But I am not thinking of that, but of the unselfishness of Jesus's human life, of His carelessness of the little things, the food and the shelter and the raiment; of His contempt for all the things that men counted great, and valuable, and worthy, of the absence of all wilfulness and caprice, the most contemptible and yet the most common marks of selfishness, from His life; the absence of all the self-pride which showed itself in His constant loving forgiveness of men, and that great unselfishness which displayed itself in His contempt of death. It is the one thing in one of our best known lives of Jesus which mars its beauty, that it accuses our Lord of cowardice in Gethsemane, says that He was young, that the thought of death was abhorrent to Him, that the tides of youthful life were running in His veins and He could not look forward with equanimity to the dark shadows of the grave. Ten thousands of His friends have

walked up to the jaws of death without fear. There were two little children in one of the villages near Pao-ting-fu during the Boxer massacres who looked right up into the eyes of the Boxers when they came into their village and threatened their lives, asking them if they were believers in the Christian's God, and they replied, "Yes, we are," refusing to deny that they were the heavenly Father's little children under the edge of the overhanging sword. Was Jesus Christ less brave than these little Chinese children who died for His name? He was not afraid of death in Gethsemane; it was not the death upon the cross from which He shrank; it was death before the cross. He feared that He might not live to die for the world upon the cross, that the agony which He was facing in the garden might so far overtax His vital energies that He would never live to come to the cross; and therefore, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, with strong crying and tears He called unto Him that was able to deliver Him from death, and was heard in that He feared. Selfishness of every sort was as distant from the nature of Jesus as the noonday is from the midnight. Oh, friends, so bent upon our ways, so set in all our little caprices of taste and of judgment and of opinion, how much we need the great, divine unselfishness of Him Who emptied Himself and became of no reputation, and took on Him the

form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross!

Think once again of the way Jesus Christ bound up in Himself all great qualities in unison and balance. It is true that many of the qualities that Jesus displays have been found in others. There are men who possess great qualities, but there has never been a man who possessed all great qualities balanced by their proper counterparts. Jesus alone took everything that is great and worthy and so balanced it with its contrary desirable quality as to keep His life free of distortion. Buddha exalted poverty and preached the contemptibleness of the things that men prize, and what is the consequence? There is a palsy as of death resting on all the lands where Buddha's influence abides, while wherever Jesus's influence has gone men have set to work with their hands, with their minds, with their hearts, and the people whom He has shaped are doing the whole work of the world. Balance off in Jesus each quality you think admirable with the quality needed to safeguard it, and you will begin to get some conception of the marvellous beauty and perfectness of that unique life. Innocent He was, and yet He had power; can you make that combination in your life? Pure He was, and yet He was not hard or unintelligent toward evil; can you make that combination? We love innocence and we lose influence. We love purity, and we become hard

and uncharitable. We fling ourselves against sin, and it is soon stern hatred not of sin alone but of the sinner also. Alone of all those who have ever taught among men Jesus Christ stands out as the One in Whom no defect but instead the perfect balance of just character was found. In this we all need to be like Him! We love truth, and grow soft. We hate lies, and grow hard. We set ourselves against sin, and before we know it our hearts have lost the tenderness of Christ. No one has ever walked with a perfect balance of life such as marked Jesus; and if there be one of us who says that Jesus was only human we stand in a position of strange responsibility and obligation; for if nineteen hundred years ago that peasant of Galilee was the kind of man He was, we of to-day, with all the advantage of what has taken place in this world by His influence, are bound to be better men than He.

Think, lastly, of the sinlessness of Jesus. He said, "Father, forgive them," but He never said, "Father, forgive Me." Alone of all who have lived, Jesus Christ was able to live His life without ever asking forgiveness. He challenged men to find a flaw in Him. "Which of you," He said, "convinceth Me of sin?" And while that was only an appeal, of course, to human standards of measurement, He went far beyond it: "I am unable to find any flaws in Myself. I do alway those things that please Him." Now

the greatest love in this world springs always from the deep sense of forgiven sin. That is what Jesus said in Simon's house. "Simon, who thinkest thou would love most, the one who has been forgiven little or much?" "Why," said Simon, "the one who has been forgiven most would love most." And yet here was one who was never forgiven at all, who loved most. You cannot keep up human piety without repentance. There never was a holy character that was not built on the consciousness of forgiveness. You can search human history through and the world from end to end, and not find in it one supremely good character that is not built on repentance and the sense of forgiven sin; and yet those things are totally absent from the life of Jesus. He stands out the one unique and stainless life. And I think that when we have got back of all that people say about Him, we will discover that that is the root of His enduring influence still. It is not the teaching of Jesus; it is not the miracles of Jesus; it is not the general beauty of Jesus's character. Men may dwell on these things wisely; they do not know the human heart if they think that these explain the hold of Christ on human life. That hold rests on Christ's sinlessness, and the deepest consciousness of man knows that it rests there. Back of all that is superficial in our thought there lie principles of action and of conviction that root themselves in this truth, that Jesus was of men

the only one who never needed to say, "Father, forgive me, for I have sinned." Far and wide through this world the hearts of men and women have turned to Him in the past, and turn to Him to-day still, and will turn to Him, until at last the ages are done, because deeply in their souls the Spirit of God is telling them that there is One who having been tempted in all points like as they are, yet without sin, is able Himself also to succour them that are tempted. The glory of our Master's life, the power of His life, the beauty of His life, the secret influence of His life, are found in this which sets Him off from us alone. He was not of us; He became of us that we who are not of Him might become of Him. He was not like us, and He became like us that we who were not like Him might become like Him. "I gave, I gave My life for thee," is His word, and it was a perfect life that He gave. Let us answer Him back from our lives of flaw and imperfection: "Thou alone art worthy! Here is my life for Thine!"

END

Nazarene Theological College
B10353

Books are to be returned on or before
the last date below

LIBREX —

252
AUTHOR Speer
S742m
TITLE The Master of the
3791
Heart

Date	Name

252
S742m
3791

Speer.

BRITISH ISLES NAZARENE COLLEGE
LIBRARY
WITHDRAWN